



Tomorrow

Short sharp shock
A Christmas story
with a high-tech
twist from
Peter Ackroyd

Reaching the parts...
How our man
in Mongolia
received his
Christmas pudding

Style story
Glad-rag tidings
for the festive
season from
Ali MacGraw

Star gazing
What today's
wise men
look for in
the heavens

Portfolio

The Times weekly Portfolio
competition prize of £20,000
was won on Saturday by Mrs
Anne Barratt of Iwer, Bucking-
hamshire. Two winners shared
the daily prize of £2,000. Mr
M. Winters, of Sidcup, Kent,
and Mr A. Bosar, of Tagby,
Leicestershire.
Portfolio list, page 14; rules
and how to play Information
Service, back page.

Chess title
rematch
in doubt

The European Chess Union
called on the Russians to
withdraw Anatoly Karpov's
challenge in February's world
title rematch, for which London
has bid £600,000, claiming three
months as insufficient between
matches. The champion, Garry
Kasparov, meanwhile, picked
to beat Jan Timman 4-2 by
winning the last game of their
challenge match.
Fifth game, page 4

Gunmen charged

M Philippe Verin, a French
prosecutor who was one of the
last four hostages freed by three
gunmen in Nantes, said his
former captors will face
attempted murder charges.

Farley check

Checks on Farley's factory in
Kendal, have started, after the
withdrawal of Ostermilk. Oster-
feed and Complan in the wake
of a salmonella outbreak.
Back Page

Legal package

Solicitors are to put a package
of proposals for rights of
audience in higher courts to
judges after discussions with
barristers ended in deadlock.
Page 3

Oil blaze clash

Police fought with some of the
2,000 people barred from their
homes after a huge oil depot fire
near Naples, in which four
people died.
Still blazing, page 5

Lahore arrests

A big protest in Lahore
against Pakistan's martial law
will go ahead despite the arrest
of leading opposition figures.
Page 4

New Irish party

A new political party, the
Progressive Democrats, has
been set up in the Irish
Republic by the deputies ex-
pelled from the opposition
Fianna Fail party. Private
opinion polls suggest it could
win 15 seats at the next election.
Page 2

Hunt ban

Farmers renting land from
Warwickshire County Council
are to be asked to sign an
agreement banning hunting on
their land.
Page 3

Swedes win Cup

In spite of two victories by
Boris Becker, the Wimbledon
champion, West Germany were
beaten 3-2 by the Swedes in the
Davis Cup tennis final. Page 16

PCW resignation

Mr Peter Cameron Webb, the
disgraced former Lloyd's under-
writer and PCW agency chair-
man, has resigned as general
manager of a Miami insurance
firm. Page 13

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Heseltine scents
victory over
Westland rescue

- Mr Michael Heseltine and his supporters are increasingly confident of victory in the conflict over a rescue package for Westland helicopters
- Mr Leon Brittan, who faces Cabinet isolation on the issue, has denied saying a European solution was preferable, but says he encouraged Mr Heseltine to seek one
- Sir John Cockney, the Westland chairman, said the European bid to be considered today "marginally improved all the terms"
- The £73.1 million bid put together by a consortium of European aircraft companies is seen as a better financial package than the Sikorsky-Fiat proposals

By Philip Webster and Judith Huntley

Mr Leon Brittan, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, was looking increasingly isolated yesterday in the Cabinet battle over the future of Westland helicopters.

The Westland board meets today to examine the £73.1 million rescue package put forward by a consortium of European aircraft companies and MPs and ministers who have backed the efforts of Mr Michael Heseltine, the Secretary of State for Defence, to find a European solution are growing more confident that he will win the day.

Sir John Cockney, Westland's chairman, who only seven days ago described Mr Heseltine's intervention to oppose the rival Sikorsky-Fiat package as "astonishing and distasteful", said yesterday that, although a lot of matters required clarification, the European bid "marginally improved all the terms".

Although Mr Brittan denied yesterday that in a minute sent to the Prime Minister on October 4 he had said a European deal was preferable, it was stated authoritatively last night that the minute showed Mr Brittan and his department had clear reservations about the Sikorsky-Fiat offer.

It also expressed the department's view that the company should do all it could to seek a European solution. Mr Brittan said in a BBC radio interview that to say - as *The Observer* reported yesterday - that he had expressed a preference for a European solution was not true and "a bit of Christmas entertainment".

He also said in the interview that at a meeting in his room in the industry department he had "positively encouraged" Mr Heseltine to see if there was a European solution, a phrase which, according to a Heseltine supporter, would have made the defence secretary "choke on his lunch" had he heard it.

It was said yesterday that the industry department had adopted a "hands off" approach and left it to Westland to put a European effort together. When that failed to bear fruit, the department was ready to accept the Westland view that the Sikorsky deal was the only viable option. It was at that time, at the meeting to which Mr Brittan referred in his interview, that Mr Heseltine intervened to say that he was going to try to find a European solution. "The idea that Mr Brittan was 'encouraging' Mr Heseltine is ludicrous," it was said.

Sir John described the European deal as a modification of earlier proposals. There were points to clear up. He said the European deal talked about "a commitment" and not a guarantee to provide a workload. He did not think a French threat to withdraw work would go down well with the workforce. "I personally dislike bullying, whether it is ministerial or foreign," he said.

Mr Heseltine, while observing the Prime Minister's order not to continue the public row over favoured options, nevertheless made clear yesterday that there was another serious obstacle in the way of the Sikorsky bid.

He said in a BBC radio interview that there was no money in the defence budget to buy Sikorsky Black Hawk helicopters, an integral part of the American-led bid.

Using the Prime Minister's argument stated on Thursday that defence procurement was a matter for the whole Government, Mr Heseltine pointed out that a committee of officials from all departments had advised against going ahead with a new tactical transport helicopter. Black Hawk had been one of the contenders.

Mr Heseltine said that any decision taken now to buy Black Hawks would mean reversing that recommendation and removing items of higher immediate priority from the defence budget to pay for them. The Ministry of Defence cannot do that, he said.

The disclosure yesterday that Libya has a 13 per cent stake in Fiat, with two members on the Fiat board, seems certain to boost the chances of the European offer and to make it more popular with Conservative MPs.

Fiat, with MBB of West Germany and Rolls Royce, is also in the consortium building engines for the RAF Tornado aircraft. Defence sources argued that that was not the same as giving them a stake in the control of a British industry, as would be the case if they won the Westland deal.

At its meeting today the Westland board will discuss the European bid. A consortium, made up of GEC, Britain's largest industrial company, British Aerospace, Aerospatiale of France, Agusta of Italy and MBB of West Germany, is offering to put £37.1 million into Westland in return for 21 per cent of the company.

Two-year slide, page 2



Mrs Winnie Mandela with two of her grandchildren in Soweto yesterday before being arrested again.

Teachers' lock-out
proposal
ridiculed

By Lucy Hodges

A suggestion that the Prime Minister wants striking teachers to be locked out of schools without pay has been condemned by all sides in the 10-month dispute.

The Prime Minister was reported in a Sunday newspaper to have "ordered" local education authorities to take this tough new line. "This is lunatic," Mrs Nicky Harrison, leader of the Labour-dominated employers, said yesterday. "There is no way we will play it according to that book."

Mr Fred Smithies, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters' Union of Women Teachers, said: "This is a stupid and entirely ill-timed initiative."

Mr Fred Jarvis, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said that no local authority would want to lock out teachers, given that they were not prepared to take disruptive teachers to court when asked to by Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Education and Science. "Such a move would simply increase our action in retaliation at such a provocative step."

Mr David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said that the Government could not expect local authorities to lock out teachers, given the vague and almost non-existent teachers' contract.

"I cannot believe many local education authorities would stick their necks out to do the Government's dirty work for them by escalating the dispute to the level that the Prime Minister seems to be suggesting," he said.

Mr Peter Smith, deputy general secretary of the Assistant and Mistresses' Association, said that teachers would not be bullied into submission, and Mrs Thatcher would have a shock if she thought they would give in easily.

Continued on back page, col 5



Mrs Nicky Harrison, who condemned the proposal

Winnie Mandela is again
dragged away by police

From Michael Hornsby, Johannesburg

Mrs Winnie Mandela, wife of Mr Nelson Mandela, the imprisoned leader of the outlawed African National Congress (ANC), was yesterday forcibly dragged from her home in Soweto by South African security policemen for the second time in two days.

There was no immediate information on where she was last night, but a police spokesman said he thought it was possible she was being held at a police station in Krugersdorp, a town to the north west of Johannesburg. He refused to answer further questions.

The drama began on Saturday when the Minister of Law and Order, Mr Louis Le Grange, cancelled Mrs Mandela's banishment, in force since 1977, to a remote rural town in the Orange Free State, and also slightly relaxed some other restrictions on her.

At the same time, he issued a new decree which prohibits her from being in the Johannesburg and Roodepoort magisterial districts, which include the Soweto township where the Mandela family home is located.

At about 5.30pm on Saturday, security policemen arrived at the house to enforce the new regulation. When Mrs Mandela refused to leave, according to a witness, a policeman drew a pistol and pointed it at her neck. "They dragged her (out)... she was resisting, by holding on to doors, on to anything she could put her hands on," the witness said.

The police later denied that a gun had been pointed at her. It was at first reported that Mrs Mandela had been taken to a hotel at Jan Smuts Airport, where the police had reserved a room for her. But she did not book in, and is understood to have spent the night with friends in Laudium, an Indian township near Pretoria.

She returned yesterday to her house in Orlando, a district of Soweto. She was being interviewed by journalists when the security police called again at about 11.15 am. There were about 12 of them, including one policewoman, in plain clothes.

One of the journalists who had hidden in another room when the police arrived said: "There was a lot of shouting and shoving and pushing going on in the living room. 'Mrs Mandela was heard to shout: 'Leave me alone, you injured me last night' - a reference to her ankle which was injured during the Saturday eviction."

She locked herself in her bedroom, insisting that she be allowed to change her clothes and that she could not do this in front of the police. She was eventually dragged away, protesting loudly.

Continued on back page, col 3

Pope praises anti-apartheid protesters

Rome (AP) - The Pope spoke out against racism in South Africa yesterday, saying anti-apartheid demonstrators championed the "undeniable" rights of man.

Speaking after his weekly blessing in St Peter's Square, the Pope praised about 10,000 people who had marched through Rome the previous day to protest against apartheid. "They demonstrate an affirmation of the values and the undeniable rights that help make man more human, and help him to realize his true dignity... And to elevate him socially, culturally and spiritually," he told an estimated 4,000 people, including some of the protesters, gathered in the square.

The Pope said the Roman Catholic Church regarded such actions with "approval and support".

6 Bishop's appeal: Bishop Trevor Huddleston, president of the Anti-Apartheid Movement, sent cables to Mrs Margaret Thatcher, President Reagan, President Mitterrand, Chancellor Kohl, and the UN Secretary-General, urging them to intervene with Pretoria to secure Mrs Mandela's unconditional release.

US alarm
on missiles
for Libya

The installation of Soviet-made SA5 long-range, anti-aircraft missiles in Libya has increased tensions between the United States and the government of Colonel Gaddafi (Christopher Thomas writes from Washington).

"This is a significant and dangerous escalation in the Soviet-Libyan arms relationship," the State Department said. "This clearly exceeds any legitimate security requirements the Libyans have."

The Libyan Government confirmed the presence of the missiles at the weekend. The US Government said it had made clear its concern to Moscow about Soviet support for "an irresponsible and erratic regime" but that "the Soviet response did not address our concerns".

The SA5 is relatively old and slow but could hit reconnaissance aircraft at heights of up to 95,000 feet. It has a range of about 150 miles.

Purest of the pure

Glenfiddich Pure Malt Whisky is unique among malts. No other Highland Malt uses a single source of pure natural spring water throughout from distilling to bottling. Since 1887 the waters of the Robbie Duff have ensured the consistent purity of taste for which Glenfiddich is justly famous.

Glenfiddich. The pure malt.

New party aims to offer 'real alternative' to Irish voters

From Richard Ford, Belfast

A new political party has been launched in the Irish Republic with the aim of breaking the traditional mould of politics by giving "a new and real alternative to voters".

The Progressive Democrats is to be led by two deputies who have been expelled from the opposition Fianna Fail Party, and hopes to attract support from it and Fine Gael by putting up candidates in more than half the constituencies at the next general election.

The new party wants to win votes from the Fianna Fail supporters who are unhappy with the leadership of Mr Charles Haughey and, in particular, the opposition's stance on the Anglo-Irish deal, which it sees as a betrayal of the aspiration to Irish unity.

Equally, it hopes to attract backing from Fine Gael - Labour voters disillusioned with the coalition government's performance in office, and, in particular, from those voters who have backed Dr Garret FitzGerald's blend of free-market economics combined with liberal social policies.

With half the population under the age of 25, the organization, launched in Dublin on an overdraft of £15,000, believes there are growing numbers of young and affluent urban voters impatient with the conservatism of Irish society and its two main political parties.

The leader of the new party is Mr Desmond O'Malley, aged 46, a former Fianna Fail minister of justice who played a central role in three attempts to unseat Mr Haughey as leader of the opposition. He said that he believed support would come equally from Fianna Fail, Fine Gael, and from a large segment of the population who had no

strong commitment to either party, or did not vote.

The party hoped to command a "substantial voice in the next Dail" by winning seats on a platform offering a peaceful approach to the Northern Ireland situation, tax reform, support for free enterprise, a clear distinction between church and State, and support for the removal of the constitutional ban on divorce.

It will concentrate on constituencies in Dublin, Cork and Limerick, and seats on the eastern seaboard where Fine Gael with its "liberal" image, is particularly strong.

His co-founder is Miss Mary Harney, who was expelled from Fianna Fail for defying the party whip and supporting the government in the vote on the Anglo-Irish deal. So far no other deputies or senators have backed the venture publicly.

Polls conducted privately for the Progressive Democrats indicate that it could win up to 15 seats enabling it to hold the balance of power or negotiate conditions on the formation of a coalition government.

Government sources suggest that a more realistic figure is eight, four from each of the two main parties.

The present state of the parties is: Fine Gael 69; Labour 15; Fianna Fail 74; Independent 3; Workers' Party 2; Progressive Democrats 2; Speaker 1.

● Eddie Gallagher, aged 42, who was jailed for 20 years for the abduction of Dr Tiede Herrema, a Dutch industrialist, has started a protest fast in Mountjoy prison, Dublin, because he claims he should be released after serving half of his sentence.

Westland's two-year slide that led to today's crisis meeting

The single strategy that crashed

By Colin Hughes

A management which put all its faith in a single vulnerable strategy for survival lay behind Westland's two-year slide into crisis.

The controversy which has come to dominate political headlines during the past two weeks began at Long Beach, California, in November 1983, when a Westland W-30 civil helicopter crashed from 2,500 ft.

The W-30, derived from the military Lynx helicopter, was planned to be Westland's answer to the need for exports through the late 1980s, when a gap in military sales was expected.

Every egg was placed in the W-30 basket at the worst possible time. Although industry predictions of a world helicopter boom worth £50 billion in sales held good for the 1990s, this decade was affected by recession.

The tail rotor on the W-30 which crashed in California raised the first questions over Westland's helicopter, and led to a plunge in shares.

At first the setback seemed temporary, with good annual results announced in December 1983, and shareholders' dividends up. It was also announced that the Indian Government had ordered 21 W-30s, worth £50 million, for its offshore oil and gas industry.

Then, in July last year, profits slumped as the order book started looking thin, and it became clear that Airbus, Los Angeles operators of the crashed aircraft, were selling their W-30 fleet.

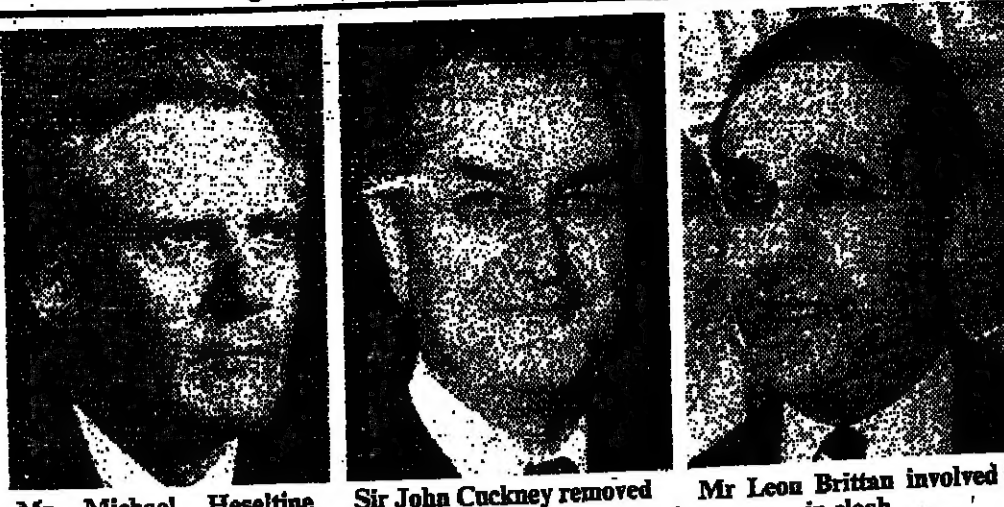
Westland was trying to gain competition from an Arab consortium which had backed out of a deal to buy another run of W-30s. In August, Westland had to announce 700 job losses, and shares fell again.

The British Government stepped in, with a straightforward interventionist subsidy offer to India. Aid worth £65 million through the Overseas Development Administration would be paid to help towards the cost of the order.

The long-term future still looked good for Westland. It had just signed contracts with Agusta of Italy to co-produce a new anti-submarine helicopter, which the Ministry of Defence wanted to replace the Sea King. Research, design and development.

Then, on December 19, the full extent of Westland's plight became public. Since the previous September 30, the company had received orders for only two Lynx helicopters to export and letters of intent for three Sea Kings.

The W-30, Westland's answer to bridging the sales gap until the EH 101 arrived, had won no



Mr Michael Heseltine backed Europe package

Sir John Cuckney removed board members

Mr Leon Brittan involved in clash



fresh orders and the RAF showed no interest in buying the new military version of the W-30. Company borrowing had risen from £20 million to £60 million in months, to retain skilled staff and plant.

To Westland's management the plan had seemed sound. Given that the company relied for 90 per cent of its income on Ministry of Defence contracts, a sales base now weakened by government cash limits, the obvious route to diversify lay in the civilian market.

But the market never materialized. It took from February of this year to early this month for the implications of impending Westland collapse to rock Cabinet politics.

Feb 1985: MoD considers Westland rescue package, for the first time in earnest. Although Westland had been asked to propose Wessex and Puma replacement (AS1400) one year earlier, only Sikorsky, with Short Brothers of Belfast, and Agusta, of France, had responded. Americans offered Black Hawk, for building in Belfast. French offered an advanced Puma version.

MoD attempt to persuade British Aerospace to bid, a move seen as condemnation of Westland manage-

ment. Lord Aldington, Westland's chairman, fulfils decision of previous year, and retires, replaced by Sir Basil Bristow, the vice-chairman.

April 1985: MoD projects request from Westland for extra funds to research and develop W-30: MoD says aircraft is inadequate.

Mr Rajiv Gandhi, India's prime minister, deals blow by querying W-30 deal: he says it is too big and expensive to run.

April 25: Bristow bids for Westland, at £289 million for 51 per cent holding. Westland's debts now £70 million.

May: Sir Basil begins searching for a buyer to save the company from Bristow takeover.

June Search fails. Sir Basil gives in to Bristow, but Bristow suddenly announces on June 21 its bid is off. Having looked at the books, Bristow's bankers believe Westland's state is too perilous to take the risk.

June 26: Sir John Cuckney takes over as Westland chairman, after discreet proposal from Bank of England that Sir Basil should go.

July 15: Westland Engineers sold off for £2.5 million cash.

Aug 6: MoD orders seven more Lynx.

Sept 3: Mr Gandhi shows how interested he is in the private sale in Europe, London and the US are about to go public.

Sept 27: Sir John removes five board members, including the helicopter business' managing director.

Sept 29: Sikorsky announces a bid for 29 per cent, enough to avoid need for full takeover. The Prime Minister is searching for ways to raise £100 million loans to help Westland over the late 1980s order book gap.

October: Mr Gandhi says the Indian deal is on again.

Oct 23: Westland borrowing now up to £100 million.

Nov 29: Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for defence, meets the chief executive of Agusta, Aerospaciale, and Messerschmitt-Bölkow-Blohm, the West German manufacturer, for talks.

Dec 4: Westland announces another 740 job cuts, and the three European companies submit a formal declaration of intent.

Dec 11: Share dealing in Westland suspended.

Dec 5-12: British Aerospace joins Euro Helicopters, European defence ministers agree to co-operate on production and development, but Sikorsky deal looks more solid: the Americans propose that Westland build and sell Black Hawk. Sikorsky has now brought Fiat in.

Dec 14: Westland accepts Sikorsky-Fiat offer.

Dec 15: GEC announces that the MoD has sought its intervention to back up the European offer. The lines for Cabinet confrontation are drawn.

Sept 27: Sir John removes five

Libyans on Fiat board their time of directors on options

By John Earle

If Westland's deal with United Technologies and Fiat goes through, the Yeovil-based helicopter maker will have Colonel Gaddafi's Libyans among its masters. Lafco, the Libyan-Arab foreign investment company, holds about 13 per cent of the shares of Fiat, Italy's biggest multinational, which besides motor cars, makes a wide range of goods, including equipment for the Italian armed services.

Lafco, which is the Libyan Government holding company for its foreign investments, has two members on the Fiat board: Mr Ali Mahmoud Elgherani and Mr Muhammad Sala. In addition, Mr Sala is a member of the five-man executive committee running Fiat under the chairman, Signor Giovanni Agnelli.

The Libyan Arab Foreign Bank originally bought a holding of about 9 per cent in Fiat in the 1970s, when Libya was flush with petrodollars. The purchase, announced at a specially-convened press conference, was negotiated by Mr Abdulla Saadi, who has emerged as one of the leading bankers in the Arab world. Subsequently, the holding was transferred to Lafco.

Fiat executives have always said they enjoyed a satisfactory working relationship with the Libyans. In all fields of trade Italian companies have close links with Libya, although because of the fall in the price of oil, Tripoli has allowed payments arrears of several hundred million dollars to accumulate.

Fiat is the parent holding company for 11 operational companies which, in addition to cars, are involved in engineering, heavy vehicles, tractors, machine tools, aerospace, precision instruments, railway equipment, as well as light manufacturing and service activities. The Libyans are reported to keep a low profile in the company's management.

THE OFFERS COMPARED

	Sikorsky/Fiat	European consortium
New money for Westland	£72.5m	£73.1m
Outside help	£20m (option for £15m more)	£27.1m
NewWest/Baird's converting money owed into shares	£24m	£22m
Rights issue to shareholders	£18.2m (at 50p a share)	£15m (at 50p a share)
Existing shareholder stake in new company	50.1%	68%
Work for Westland	1m man hours over 3 yrs guaranteed	8.5m man hours over 5 yrs. No guarantee.
Participation in Black Hawk Technology for MoD. Work on French developments + marketing NH90, rival for Black Hawk, for Westland production.		Sir Sir King helicopters for MoD. Work on French developments + marketing NH90, rival for Black Hawk, for Westland production. French threaten to take away 1.75m hours of existing work.

Foam prank girl 'died naturally'

A girl who collapsed during a shaving foam prank died of natural causes, a post-mortem examination has shown. Tests are continuing and an inquest will be opened today. Friends of Samantha Hill aged 15, were spraying shaving foam at an end of school term Christmas disco in Torquay, Devon, on Friday night when she collapsed.

Her father, Mr Brian Hill, of Grenville Avenue, Torquay, said yesterday: "I refuse to believe the prank was not the cause of her death. If it was not for the panic it caused, she would be alive for Christmas."

TV meets union

Talks aimed at settling the ITV electricians' dispute are to take place today between the EETPU and the television companies.

The electricians have been in dispute for two weeks over issues in a new draft agreement affecting overnight working and shift contracts.

Ill-chosen computers 'cost £5bn'

Commission-hungry computer salesmen are costing British industry and commerce up to £5 billion a year in lost efficiency, it was claimed yesterday.

Under pressure to make a sale at any cost, they are failing to match computer systems with their clients' needs. The result can be disaster, and litigation running into millions of pounds a year.

Mr Maurice Hamlin, a computer consultant, said yesterday that a report sponsored by the Department of Trade and Industry and the Institute of Administrative Management had calculated that £800 million a year spent on information technology was wasted.

"This is a serious under-estimate because it assumes that only newly-installed systems are under-used," he said. "The true figure when you take into account the accumulated capacity of systems bought over the years is nearer £5 billion."

Move against Japanese curbs

By Richard Evans, Lobby Reporter

The Government is masterminding a new European initiative which would reduce Britain's bulging trade deficit with Japan.

In spite of repeated promises by the Japanese to open their doors to more British goods, exporters still meet obstacles and the trade gap between the two countries now tops £3 billion a year.

Faced with growing pressure from Conservative backbenchers to take retaliatory measures against what are seen as unfair Japanese trade barriers, Mr Leon Brittan, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, has come up with a new idea aimed

at making the Japanese government reveal its import strategy. If, as expected, Britain's EEC partners agree to the plan, Japan would be asked to declare its annual import targets, the amount of goods it expects to import.

At present such figures are kept secret, in contrast with the approach of western governments. A Whitehall source said: "They know what we will buy from them, but they refuse to say what they will buy from us."

If Japan co-operates, EEC governments would have a benchmark against which they could monitor exports.

But if Mr Brittan's initiative

is rebuffed, ministers are talking openly of erecting selective trade barriers, which could be the first step in an all-out trade war with Japan. But such an idea is unlikely to gain unaided EEC support with Italy, which has long-standing and preferential trade agreements with Japan, and West Germany objecting.

Meanwhile a group of officials has been set up at the Department of Trade and Industry to see how British companies can export more to Japan. Much of the existing trade is in specialized areas, and ministers believe this can be considerably expanded.

Disasters at sea

Huge tankers branded 'unsound'

By Richard Dowden

A leading naval scientist has accused the Government, Lloyd's Register of Shipping and shipbuilders of ignoring research which shows that metal fatigue has probably caused the loss of several big ships in recent years, and that huge tankers and bulk carriers are fundamentally unsound.

Professor Richard Bishop, vice-chancellor and principal of Brunel University in west London, who has been studying how ships behave at sea for more than 15 years, said that attitudes to shipbuilding in the United Kingdom are "both dangerous and potentially ruinous."

"If I had to guess what is the major cause for large ships going missing I should unhesitatingly vote for massive fatigue cracking," Professor Bishop said. His research has tried to estimate the distortion and motions of ships in rough seas and how these might lead to cracking.

The safety rules applying to the construction of ships ignore both hull cracking or "damping," which is the ability of a ship to bend with the waves.

Professor Bishop said that after extensive study by a team at Brunel, it was concluded that the Derbyshire, the largest British ship lost at sea, had split just in front of the superstructure "after suffering gross fatigue."

The Derbyshire, one of 160 ships which foundered or went missing in 1980, vanished off Japan with the loss of 44 lives. There was no SOS and only a

small part of a lifeboat was found.

The report was sent to the Department of Transport, an internal department disclosed that all five of the Derbyshire's sister ships, built between 1971 and 1976 at the Tyneside yard of Swan Hunter, suffered from cracking at the exact point the Brunel study suggested.

Professor Bishop said the Derbyshire had split. One, the Tyne Bridge, has to take refuge in the Elbe and its crew taken off by helicopter in 1983, after it developed a massive crack.

There has been no public inquiry and no Department of Transport report on the loss of the Derbyshire. Dependents of its crew are suing Swan Hunter, now part of British Shipbuilders, for compensation.

All the sister ships are in foreign hands now and their owners, spoken to last week, would not confirm whether they had undergone structural alteration in the light of the report.

Professor Bishop's view is supported by Mr Marshall Meek, a former head of ship technology at British Shipbuilders, who described the shipbuilding world as a "sea of incompetence and indifference."

"There is just no incentive for shipbuilder, operator, repairer or anyone else to go out of his way to achieve greater safety by incorporating more advanced technology," he said.

The departments of Trade and Industry and Transport avoided answering questions on the subject and a Lloyd's Register of Shipping representa-

tive was unavailable for comment. A spokesman for the Royal Institution of Naval Architects said that he would not comment on a note mentioned in connection with any article on the subject.

Professor Bishop said: "In aircraft manufacture safety is established by scientific principle at every step. Safety is paramount and economics come second, but in shipbuilding it appears to be the other way round."

"The rules are the problem... they need a complete overhaul in a qualitative sense. I cannot get this across to the professionals. We must have published well over 100 scientific papers on the subject but we have never had anyone from Lloyd's or an important British shipbuilder come to Brunel for help. On the other hand we have research students from all over the world, particularly Japan and China; a long lead is being lost for Britain," he said.

Professor Bishop said that small ships survive better than large ones because they have high frequency hulls which cope better with the low frequencies of the sea.

Large ships, however, have low frequency hulls which respond differently. They pick up the rhythm of waves, whereas the rapid vibrations of small ships dissipate these powers.

Shipbuilders and classifiers do not appear to understand this problem and the rules of shipbuilding have not been changed accordingly, he said.

Managers rebuff pay restraint

By Barrie Clement

Government arguments on the need for pay restraint have lost support among managers and trade unionists according to a survey published today by Epic Industrial Communications.

Only 58 per cent of managers accept the contention that large wage rises lead to unemployment, compared with 73 per cent in January. Trade union agreement with the proposition is down from 39 per cent to 22 per cent, the researchers found.

However, opposition parties have also lost backing for their income policy approach to the economy. Only 29 per cent of managers and 47 per cent of trade unionists believe incomes policy would make a contribution to economic recovery.

In addition, 81 per cent of trade unionists and 85 per cent of managers agree that successful private companies will effectively ignore any such policy.

About 39 per cent of trade unionists and 55 per cent of managers believe that the Government's approach to public sector pay rises is "as effective as any other form of incomes policy."

Epic Industrial Relations Survey (7 Leicester Place, London WC2H 7BP)

British dons take sides on Star Wars

By Ronald Faux

Scientists at both Edinburgh universities are involved in the Star Wars programme controversy. Heriot-Watt University has become the first centre outside America to be offered a contract to take part in the SDI research programme and granted political clearance. It will be asking for \$1 million to develop optical computer, in which the university's physics department holds a world lead.

The speed and integrity of signals transferred in such a system by light beam rather than wire is so greatly increased that the implications are enormous for such computer concepts in computer design. SDI. It was these implications that drew American attention to the Heriot-Watt research.

Prof Desmond Smith, head of the department, and leader of a European Community research programme designing the world's first optical computer, said: "Transmitting information by optical methods is some 200 times faster, but much more exciting are the concepts in computer design which could come from this research, leading eventually to computers that operate 1,000 times faster than at present, with a recognition ability matching that of the human brain." Such a computer would

be an invaluable element of a Star Wars system.

But scientists based at Edinburgh University department of artificial intelligence, expressing a personal and not a university opinion, are so alarmed by the implications of the SDI programme that they have formed a group known as Computing and Social Responsibility.

Dr Alan Bundy, a reader in the department, said: "Our objection is that the SDI programme would probably be the largest ever written. It was used for real it would have to work the first time. From our experience as computer programmers, we know that any programme of any size will inevitably suffer from bugs which no amount of research in the future is going to resolve."

The software for such a system would be so vulnerable there would be an inevitable risk that it would release a catastrophic onslaught in space for the wrong reason. "It would have to react in a few tenths of a second to a constructed threat. We have already had the Nord early warning system triggered off in a high state of alertness by a flock of geese and the moon rising. This unreliable system would react so quickly no human intervention would be possible."

The Press Council has rejected three complaints against separate national newspapers concerning the National Front and a similar organization, in adjudications published today.

Allegations in the riots at the European Cup final in Brussels, at which 38 people died, are the subject of two of those complaints, an attempt by two journalists posing as sympathizers to infiltrate a similar organization prompted the third.

Mr Patrick Harrington of the National Front's legal department had complained of articles in the Daily Star (as it was then) under the headline "The Evil Ones", alleging that members of the Front and other political organizations were responsible for causing the riot.

Although the NF was quoted as denying general responsibility, the editor declined to allow the group to reply to the specific allegations, and refused to provide the name of a Special Branch officer quoted.

The Press Council ruled that The Star, as it is now known, had published "a reasonably balanced report on the evidence adduced"; there was no obligation to publish a further reply.

A National Front complaint against the Sunday Mirror for a similar story is also rejected on the ground that "the story included a vigorous response by the National Front whose secretary was quoted as saying the reports of their involvement were 'complete rubbish'."

In the third complaint, Mr Terry Flynn, of Crispin Road, Bradville, Milton Keynes, claimed that two Sunday People journalists improperly used subterfuge, acting as agents provocateurs when seeking information about him and his organization, the November 9th Society.

The Times overseas selling prices: Australia \$20, Canada \$20, Europe £10, India \$20, Japan \$20, New Zealand \$20, Pakistan \$20, Singapore \$20, South Africa \$20, USA \$20, West Indies \$20.

Judges to consider claims by solicitors in new round of 'Bar Wars'

By Frances Gibb, Legal Affairs Correspondent

Solicitors have drawn up a radical package of proposals for wider rights of audience in the higher courts in the latest round of their battle with the Bar.

The proposals are to be put to a meeting on January 13 of 105 Court of Appeal and High Court judges. Talks between the two branches of the profession have already reached deadlock.

The solicitors are clearly laying claim to far wider rights of audience than they have so far indicated, and their action is certain to fuel antagonism between the profession's two branches in what has become colloquially known as 'Bar Wars'.

Talks between the branches have led to agreement only that in a very limited range of High Court actions solicitors should be able to appear, and there are still wide differences between them.

The Law Society is now proceeding to put its case to the Master of the Rolls, Sir John Donaldson, who instigated the meeting of 105 senior judges to discuss the issue as colleagues after a recent test case on rights of audience brought by Cyril Smith, MP.

A special committee of the Law Society has drawn up its 'shopping list' of work it wants for solicitors in the High Court, where barristers have a monopoly on all proceedings in open court.

That list includes not only the strictly 'formal and unop-

posed' matters, such as applications for injunctions in the Chancery Division, statements of settlement in libel or personal injury cases, and company winding-up petitions, for example, but the right of solicitors to argue costs at the end of an action and to take over cases where a barrister at the last minute falls ill or has to be changed.

The solicitors are arguing that in the case of costs, it is the solicitor who not only has the detailed knowledge but also a direct interest. Solicitors are responsible for briefing barristers and paying their costs.

In cases where a barrister has to drop out suddenly the solicitors argue, that the person who has followed the proceedings right through and is therefore best able to take the case over is a solicitor. That might apply particularly in a long-running personal injury case.

Talks between the two branches have been aimed at deciding what proceedings are 'formal and unopposed' because it was in such proceedings that the royal commission on legal services in 1979 recommended that solicitors should have a right to appear.

The Lord Chancellor's department has recently indicated the royal commission's proposal should be implemented and invited both branches to consider how this can be done.

The Bar is taking a strictly

limited view of what constitutes 'formal and unopposed'. It may agree that the reading of a statement at the end of a libel action would be covered, but rejects any notion that any proceedings involving argument would be covered.

For its part the Bar is pressing in return for barristers to have a right to deal direct with clients in certain cases. Apart from rights of audience, the profession operates a second restrictive practice, which is that only solicitors deal with clients.

The Bar has announced it is changing its rules requiring counsel appearing in magistrates' courts to have a solicitor in attendance. The Law Society has agreed to this, but on the Bar's wider claims for direct access by other professions, such as accountants, the society has not given way, and has requested 'more details'.

Next month's meeting of judges comes after a test case backed by the Law Society and Times Newspapers over whether a solicitor could read a settlement of a libel action. The Master of the Rolls rejected the appeal but said judges could decide as a group who should meet before them.

If the Law Society is unsuccessful at the January meeting it has made clear that it is only the start of its campaign for increased rights of audience and it will if necessary press for legislation to secure the change.

Doors open for the poor and homeless

Crisis at Christmas will open the doors of the disused Central London Garage, near Euston station, at 2 pm today to welcome more than 1,000 homeless people.

During the next seven days the charity, which for the past 19 years has been giving the homeless a Christmas treat, will serve more than 15,000 hot meals and provide clean clothes and somewhere to sleep for the lonely and unemployed.

This Christmas, the charity's army of 750 volunteers are preparing for a record number of homeless, particularly the young, who have moved to London from country and outer London areas, only to find hard times.

Some people aged as young as 16 will be queuing along with the hundreds of 'regular' street vagrants for their share of festive cheer. After 13 years of helping Crisis at Christmas work smoothly, Mr Caspar Wherry, the charity's Christmas co-ordinator, said it was depressing to realize that the charity was more in demand today than it was 19 years ago.

"The plight of the homeless, both young and old, is getting no better. That is the sad reality," Mr Wherry said, as his helpers, many of them college students and Londoners, prepared the vast Christmas lunch supplies, as well as a mountain of clothing given by the public.

Shelter, the national housing charity, said that this Christmas will be particularly lonely for the many young homeless aged between 16 and 25. The Government's new board and lodgings regulations, combined with a serious shortage of housing and short-term accommodation throughout Britain, will double, if not treble, the number of single homeless next year.

"The record number of homeless in both country and city regions shows that Victorian England has returned with a vengeance," Miss Claire Booker, a spokesman for Shelter, said in London. Tens of thousands will spend Christmas sleeping rough throughout the country, she said.

The lucky ones will find a hot meal and a bed with organizations and charities such as Crisis at Christmas, or temporary accommodation with friends, while they search for work.

In England alone, 23,000 families were classified as homeless last year. In London, a report released by the Greater London Council last month showed a 700 per cent rise in the official homeless total in 15 years, to 27,500 families. But Shelter, Crisis at Christmas and other charities



Ann Griffin and Anna Marshall at the disused garage with a pile of bed covers given to Crisis at Christmas for the homeless. (Photograph: Peter Trievnor.)

believe the number is much higher. "The high rents on what accommodation is available, and low salaries offered to young people, don't help the situation. Christmas is just the beginning of their own 'hard times'," Miss Booker said. Shelter will refer many of its young homeless to Crisis at Christmas so they can at least get a roast turkey dinner, a bath and a mattress to sleep on during the festive period.

Shelter believes the Government's board and lodgings regulations have removed the safety net for the single

homeless. "The Government must face up to the fact that there is a young homeless crisis and these youngsters will not just disappear early next year when they are tossed out of their board and lodgings. Instead they will end up sleeping in hedges, on streets, under bridges, or roaming the countryside. We face the prospect of a new generation of homeless," Miss Booker said.

Crisis at Christmas will accept donations of food, clothing or money at its headquarters at 212 White-chapel Road, London, E1 1BJ.

and early potatoes, have to be imported to meet market demands which cannot be supplied from store, there is still, clearly, considerable scope for import substitution.

Compared with a cereal crop worth about £2.5 billion, the figures may not seem very large in total, but for individual farmers they still suggest opportunities for diversification. For example, growing 40,000 tonnes more cauliflowers and 200,000 tonnes more onions in Britain could take some 11,500 hectares (30,000 acres) out of unwanted grain production.

Grain curbs could cut imports

By John Young, Agriculture Correspondent

Further restraints on cereal production, far from being a disaster for growers, could provide large savings on imports and substantial benefits to the nation's balance of payments. Land in areas such as the Fens, which because of high intervention prices has been turned over to wheat and barley, could revert to growing traditional English vegetables.

Last year, according to Department of Trade figures, Britain imported 370,000 tonnes of potatoes worth £73 million; more than 50,000 tonnes of cauliflowers (£16 million); 40,000 tonnes of

cabbages (£9.3 million); 2,700 million; nearly 600 tonnes of spinach (£240,000); 26,000 tonnes of salad vegetables (£21 million); more than 1,000 tonnes of peas (£995,000); 4,200 tonnes of beans (£3.7 million); 937 tonnes of celery (£348,000); and 236,000 tonnes of tomatoes (£116 million).

Customs and excise figures show that in 1983 Britain imported 35,000 tonnes of carrots and turnips, worth £8,600,000 and 198,000 tonnes of onions, valued at £22 million. Although some imports, notably out-of-season tomatoes

and early potatoes, have to be imported to meet market demands which cannot be supplied from store, there is still, clearly, considerable scope for import substitution.

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Thames TV rethink on sex molester

Thames Television may give the police a lead in any attempts to question an anonymous self-confessed child molester who appeared on TV Eye last Thursday.

The television company is keen to head off a dispute over its treatment of the interview

and is likely to reconsider its decision not to name the man's psychiatrist.

Yesterday a Thames spokesman said: "We will not be obstructive. If the only way we can help the police is to give the name of the psychiatrist, obviously we may have to have a rethink."

No formal approach has been made to Thames by police, as yet. A Scotland Yard spokesman said yesterday that he believed officers had obtained a recording of the programme.

County bans hunting on 45,000 farm acres

By Hugh Clayton, Environment Correspondent

Warwickshire County Council is to ban foxhunting across its land and will write the ban into new tenancy agreements with farmers. The hunting of hares across the 45,000 acres of farmland owned by the council will not be affected.

The Warwickshire ban, supported by Labour and Alliance councillors, is the first to be imposed by a council in which Conservatives lost control in the Mayshire elections.

Others are expected to follow, and a proposal to ban the hunting of live prey across more than 40,000 acres of council land in Cambridgeshire has been passed by a narrow majority in the property sub-committee.

The Cambridgeshire proposal will be debated by the full council in February, and is part of a trend that is worrying hunts across the country. Captain Ronnie Wallace, a joint master of the Exmoor foxhounds and chairman of the Masters of Foxhounds Association, said that the remorseless loss of open country was the main threat to foxhunting.

He predicted that a million people would attend the traditional Boxing Day meets of foxhunts.

The League Against Cruel Sports said that the hunting of live prey had been banned by 56 councils throughout Britain. Although they included some inner-city authorities which owned no open countryside, it was an important declaration of principle by hundreds of councillors.

Masters of foxhounds see the council bans as part of a worrying trend to 'lock up' stretches of countryside either on animal welfare grounds or as nature reserves.

"There is a temptation for people who do not understand to try to create islands of conservation," Captain Wallace said. "It is not good saying, 'This is my patch, and I am going to keep deer or orchids or butterflies, and no one is going to come onto it.'"

Spectacles firm will fight on

From Tim Jones, Cardiff

Magnivision, which sells "reading glasses" without prescription or examination, is to continue challenging the monopoly of opticians in spite of being fined £250 last week for the offence.

Mr John Cardrick, the UK managing director, said yesterday that the £15 "readers" would not be withdrawn from stores throughout Britain. "We intend to appeal against this decision through the European courts."

Magnivision was prosecuted by the General Optical Council to determine whether its readers were "optical appliances" under the Opticians Act 1958.

Finding for the council, magistrates in Cardiff ruled there had been no infringement of the Treaty of Rome.

Upsurge in non-alcoholic drink sales

By Teresa Poole

Sales of low alcohol and alcohol-free lagers and beers have increased during the holiday period, probably in response to a tougher government attitude towards drunken drivers.

The leading non-alcoholic beverage, which is estimated to hold 70 per cent of the market, has been selling 15 per cent more in the pre-Christmas weeks, according to Bass Charrington, its manufacturer.

Total sales of such products, at about £16 million a year, are still only a tiny proportion, less than 1 per cent, of the British lager and beer market, but consumers now have a choice of almost a dozen brands.

"We all foresee substantial growth in this area arising from the changes in attitudes," Mr Bob Little, the marketing manager at Canada Dry Rawlings, which handles Baribara, said. Lager usually contains between 4 per cent and 6 per cent of alcohol by volume. Alcohol-free brands must have less than five parts in ten thousand (0.05 per cent) of alcohol and "low alcohol" normally means less than 1 per cent by volume.

Mrs Lynda Chalker, Minister of State, for Transport, recently launched a vigorous campaign against drunken driving. Mr Mike Ratcliffe, national marketing manager for Allied Breweries said that Mrs Chalker's campaign and the knowledge that the police would stop drivers who looked as if they might have been drinking, had no doubt had an effect.

Allied sells its own alcohol-free lager under the St Christopher trademark, and imports Danish Light, a lager with 0.6 per cent alcohol.

Courage imports two low-alcohol brands, Gerstel and Swan Special Light, both of which are brewed to full strength before having most of the alcohol removed through an extraction process. The other method is to brew the drink to a very low level of alcohol either by using a special strain of yeast or by prematurely stopping the fermentation process.

Judge accused of kerb crawling

Mr Colin Hart-Leverton, QC, a crown court recorder is to be prosecuted in the new year for alleged kerb crawling in London. Mr Hart-Leverton, aged 49, who has twice stood as a Liberal candidate for Parliament, was summoned last week under section 1 (1) of the Sexual Offences Act 1963.

Shoppers hurt

A family of three and a girl, aged 13, were hurt last night when a 250lb aluminium and steel power pot crashed on to their heads as they were entering the Harpur shopping precinct in Bedford. The parents were allowed home after treatment but their daughter, aged 14, and the girl were admitted with head injuries.

Air mail

An inflated balloon with a labelled address, sent by Mrs Shirley Butler, of Eastwood, Nottinghamshire, as a Christmas present, has been delivered intact by the post office to her mother in Kent.

Thousands of extra holidays on offer

By Derek Harris

As bookings for next summer's package holidays continue to flood in stimulated by the price war another of the big operators is boosting its programme with more holiday offers. Horizon, is putting another 70,000 holidays on the market in a new brochure, increasing the size of its summer programme by nearly 14 per cent.

Thomson, which started the price war during the autumn, has added 250,000 holidays to its brochure.

Winter holiday sales are also increasing. The average rise is between 15 per cent and 20 per cent, according to Mr Paul Brett, managing director of Thomson, whose own winter sun bookings have increased almost 20 per cent compared with last winter.

Horizon claims its winter ski bookings are up 70 per cent, and winter sun holiday bookings a fifth.

Long-haul holiday bookings such as those to the Far East and the Caribbean are up probably 15 per cent according to Thomson Cook which reports a 20 per cent increase in bookings on its own long-haul breaks.

Thomson, whose bookings for next summer's holidays are four times higher than for the

same time last year, is now firmly predicting an increase in this market of a fifth. "There is a massive return to Spain and Greece is maintaining its popularity," Mr Brett said.

Thomson claims that, with 750,000 bookings for summer 1986 already achieved it accounts for half of the market at this stage. Mr Brett's forecast is that Thomson will finish up with 35 per cent of the market.

With the big companies locked in the price battle, the medium-size operators are barely able to compete. Much of the increased market share is likely to be seized by big operators at the expense of the other smaller operators competing in the mass market.

Intasun's main edition brochure for summer 1986, which goes on sale on January 2, contains few of the price rises threatened earlier by the company.

Mr Roger Heape, managing director of Intasun Holidays, said: "Some prices are slightly up, but thousands have been maintained." Improved exchange rates and expected fuel price reductions have helped. Intasun said that on its early brochure it has sold about 500,000 holidays.

The forgotten illness

Counting the cost of a daughter's death

The Times series on schizophrenia last week has brought to light tragic cases and the problems they bring to families. Marjorie Wallace explains how one family will have to pay to get at the facts of their daughter's death.

Ruth and James Joly today face legal fees of £3,000 to discover how their mentally ill daughter came to die on a hospital outing to Brighton. The daughter, Angela Joly, aged 41, a patient at St Mary Abbots hospital in west London walked into rough seas from Brighton beach and, in spite of a rescue attempt, drowned.

The hospital telephoned the woman's parents at their home in St George's Square, Fimlico, London, and told them of her death, but gave no further information. To find out what happened they had to instruct lawyers to represent them at the inquest and to cross-examine witnesses.

The inquest was held at Brighton coroner's court on November 26. Mr Edward Grace, the coroner was told that a party of 29 patients and 11 staff from the hospital went on the annual coach outing to Brighton last August. On arrival the party split up. The staff went shopping in the Lanes, and the patients wandered around the streets or strolled on the beach unsupervised.

A consultant psychiatrist at St Mary Abbots, told the inquest that Miss Joly was greatly distressed and had made a number of suicide attempts in the past.

A statement read by the woman to staff and patients at the hospital the day before the outing was read to the inquest. It described "her violently self-destructive anxiety" and Mr Norman Perrin a fellow patient, told the court how she had been



Angela Joly, who had a long history of mental illness

greatly distressed on the journey and had threatened to get off the coach to return to the hospital. He had told another patient and member of the staff who had tried to comfort her.

At the end of the seven-hour hearing the jury returned a verdict of manslaughter.

In a letter to the hospital, Mr Grace questioned whether she should have been permitted to go on the outing and whether the patient should have been allowed to do whatever she wished without supervision.

He made recommendation to prevent similar accidents: patients should be assessed before such an outing, and that staff should always be available and aware of patients' activities.

For Mr Joly, a retired naval officer and his wife, the lack of information and concern from the hospital about their daughter's illness, summed up 20 years of frustration. They said they had been repeatedly told by social workers there was nothing wrong with her beyond being over-dependent on her family, spoiled and finding difficulties with relationship.

Mr Joly says: "Because she

was an adult, she was deemed by the doctors and social workers to be able to regulate safely her own affairs and to be better off forced to do her own thing and not to be confined."

She had a long history of mental illness, at one time diagnosed as "schizo-affective". She had been a gifted child who grew into a beautiful and popular young woman. At the age of 18 she won a county award to Oxford University, but within two weeks of arriving there she had broken down.

Doctors told the parents very little about what was wrong with their daughter, and she improved sufficiently to get a degree at Bristol University. She obtained a series of responsible jobs but was unable to keep any of them.

The loss of a job often triggered acute anxiety and on several occasions she was admitted to hospital. Four times she attempted suicide. After another attempt at Christmas 1984 she was left to live on her own in a flat but could make appointments to see hospital social workers. At the inquest Mrs Joly told the coroner: "They were always telling her she had to stand on her own feet and become more independent from me. Every time she came back from a visit to the social worker, she always seemed worse than before."

By May this year she was so depressed her general practitioner advised that St Mary Abbots accepted her as an inpatient. This they did reluctantly. Her medication, a fortnightly injection of Maudes, a neuroleptic drug which controls the more acute symptoms of schizophrenia, were reduced. She became brighter, but more disturbed, claiming the television set was talking to her.

Ons July evening, about four

weeks before the fatal outing she attempted to hang herself. Shortly before her death she told her parents that the hospital was ordering her discharge.

Judith Bryant, chief nursing officer for the Riverside Health Authority responsible for St Mary Abbots said last week: "The nature of the outing and its purpose was to test the independence of patients in fairly controlled circumstances and attempt to assess their ability to cope with that."

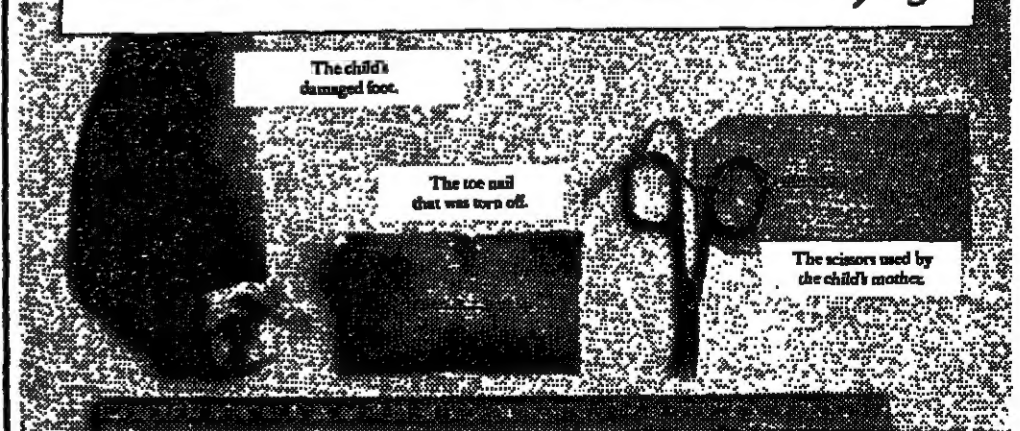
"As a result of the coroner's inquest we will be looking carefully at the circumstances surrounding Angela Joly's death and at the recommendations made by the coroner. The relationship between adult psychiatric patients and the hospital has always been a difficult issue. The parents are not as close to the situation as they would like to be."

Mr and Mrs Joly are prevented from bringing a case for medical negligence because it would cost at least £25,000 and the waiting list for such cases is three or more years. "We do not want to blame or ruin individual careers, but it would have lessened our bitterness had the hospital admitted their failures," Mrs Joly said. "Surely the present unsatisfactory attitude to both patients and their supporting families will change so that common sense and compassion will prevail."

Miss Joly left a number of poems including this one entitled *Angela's Legacy*: If you were here I would hold you And let you find tranquility in my arms. Peace beyond understanding. Repose beyond by body. But with my heart And broken mind My dreams I give to you.

Letters, page 11

It wasn't the Gestapo in 1942. It was the child's mother in 1985.



Because he had received a poor school report, a nine year old boy had a toe nail ripped out by his mother.

She did it with a pair of scissors. She did it in a town in England. And she did it recently.

Forty years ago, this kind of barbarity went by the name of 'war crime' or 'atrocities'.

Today, it beggars description.

The threat of similar mistreatment hangs over many children. They desperately need someone to protect them.

That's often the NSPCC. We have to work very hard. And we can't do it for nothing.

£15.48 can protect a child for 2 weeks.

There are more than 37,000 children being helped by the Society in a year.

As Christmas approaches, we want to make sure that there's some momentary joy in their lives.

You can make sure this is possible by sending what you can afford to the NSPCC using the coupon below.

Remember, our struggle did not end forty years ago. We're fighting the battle against child abuse every day, and it costs money.

I want to help protect a child and enclose my cheque or postal order for: £15.48 £30.96 £46.44 £92.88 (please indicate appropriate box)

Access and Visa card holders may debit their accounts.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Please send your donation to: Dr A. Gilchrist, NSPCC, FREEPOST, London EC1A 1JQ.

THE CASE QUOTED HERE IS A TRUE EXAMPLE. SOME DETAILS HAVE BEEN CHANGED TO PROTECT THE IDENTITY OF THE CHILD.

Indonesia seeks peace in Cambodia through meeting with Vietnamese

From Paul Routledge, Singapore

Indonesia today launches a spirited bid to bring peace to war-ravaged Cambodia, almost seven years to the day since Vietnamese troops marched in.

Top officials of the Foreign Ministry in Jakarta are to have two days of exploratory negotiations with a high-ranking delegation from Hanoi, led by the deputy Foreign Minister, Mr Nguyen Dy Nien.

It will be the first meeting of the Vietnam-Indonesia working group set up after months of tentative peace feelers put out to Hanoi by the Indonesians, the official "interlocutory" country of the Association of South East Asian Nations (Asean).

Indonesia's Foreign Minister, Dr Mochtar Kusumaatmadja, said the talks would focus on further steps towards solving the Cambodian conflict. The main thrust would be directed towards "ways of achieving reconciliation between the four Khmer groups".

These are the Heng Samrin administration installed in Phnom Penh after the Vietnamese ousted the Khmer Rouge regime of the infamous Pol Pot, and the three component groups of the Asean-inspired coalition government of Democratic Kampuchea: the forces of

Prince Norodom Sihanouk; the Khmer People's National Liberation Front headed by the former Cambodian prime minister, Mr Son Sann; and the Khmer Rouge, officially no longer under Pol Pot, who has "retired".

The Indonesian plan apparently envisages an "internal solution" among these groups so that the Vietnamese could withdraw their estimated 160,000 forces well before the scheduled deadline of 1990.

There would then be elections designed to yield an independent regime that was not hostile either to Vietnam or to the Asean members.

Dr Mochtar has visited Bangkok and Singapore to reassure Asean members which have the greatest misgivings about confining the peace initiative to Khmer groups. An earlier version of this formula founded on Thai insistence that Vietnam must be involved directly because Hanoi is "the organ grinder" in Cambodia.

The two-day meeting in Jakarta, hosted by Mr Nana Sutrisna, director general of political affairs in the Indonesian Foreign Ministry, will examine prospects for a variation on Prince Sihanouk's idea of a "cocktail party" to bring together the warring parties.

But instead of bringing in China, the Soviet Union and Vietnam it would comprise only the Khmer groups. "What is a better format?" Dr Mochtar asked. Asean had been trying to find a solution for years "but has anybody asked what the Kampuchians themselves want. We have been thinking for them. It is high time we asked them to put their heads together and tell us what they want."

The "Khmer-only" format may prove attractive to Hanoi, as it lends some legitimacy to the Heng Samrin regime, which the Vietnamese insist must be recognized as the lawful government.

Politically, the Liberation Front is riven with factionalism. A splinter group led by elements who want greater co-operation with the Sihanoukists claims to have taken control, while keeping Mr Son Sann as figurehead president.

Against this uncertain background, Dr Mochtar said the Heng Samrin administration and Prince Sihanouk had indicated a readiness to attend the proposed informal peace conference, while Mr Son Sann seemed "inclined towards accepting". There has been no word from the elusive Khmer Rouge.

Life of struggle for Winnie Mandela

From Michael Hornsby Johannesburg

It is a marriage custom among the Xhosa people to whom Mrs Winnie Mandela and her imprisoned husband, Nelson, belong that the wedding cake should be cut at the bridegroom's home in the presence of his elders.

Although they were married in 1958, when she was 24 and he 40, they never found time to observe the custom before Mr Mandela was imprisoned in 1962 for five years for incitement and leaving the country illegally. While serving his term, he was tried again, convicted of sabotage and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Mrs Mandela still has the cake, awaiting her husband's release. It will probably have to wait a while longer. "Miraculously, perhaps symbolically, it

has never crumbled away," she says.

A woman of formidable spirit and striking beauty, with an infectious laugh that punctuates her conversation, Winnie Nomzamo (meaning in Xhosa "She who strives") Mandela has become a black nationalist leader in her own right.

The daughter of a teacher, she was born in Bizana, in Pondoland, and in her late teens became South Africa's first trained black medical social worker at Baragwanath hospital in Soweto, the sprawling African township outside Johannesburg.

She had been married to Mr Mandela, already a member of the executive of the then still legal African National Congress (ANC), only three months when she was arrested for her part in demonstrations

against the pass laws which severely restrict the movements of blacks.

Mrs Mandela was on the executive of the ANC's women's league, and also chaired the ANC's branch in Orlando, the district of Soweto in which her family lives, until 1960 when the organization was banned.

Her first arrest began a series of detentions, bannings and harassment by the authorities, coupled with the difficulties of bringing up a young family without their father.

In 1959 she was charged under the Terrorism Act and found not guilty on appeal, but in 1962 she was "banned" under the Suppression of Communism Act. This restricted her to give up her job as a social worker. More stringent

banning orders were served on her in 1965 and 1966.

In 1967 she was charged on two occasions for contravening her banning order, and sentenced to 12 months in prison, all but four days of which were suspended. In 1969 she was detained under the Terrorism Act and held in solitary confinement for 17 months.

On being released from jail, she was immediately served with a new banning order which included house arrest. She repeatedly violated the order, and in 1974 was punished with a six-month jail sentence.

Her banning was lifted in 1975, but she was detained again from August to December of the following year, the year of the Soweto riots. In 1977 the Black Parents' Association, which she had helped found and which tried to provide legal

medical assistance to victims of police action, was banned.

At the end of 1976 she had been served with yet another banning order, which was changed in 1977 to one of banishment. She was forced to leave her Soweto home and live in a three-room house in a primitive African "location" outside Brandfort in the Orange Free State.

In August of this year, her Brandfort home was burnt down by still unapprehended assailants. Since early November she had been defying a police order to return to the home.

In early December she made a dramatic appearance at an open-air mass funeral in Mandelani, a black township outside Pretoria, for victims of police shootings. The police still took no action against her.

Pretoria accused of Lesotho murders

From Michael Hornsby Johannesburg

The African National Congress has accused Pretoria of murdering six of its members and three Lesotho nationals in the attack on two houses in Maseru, the Lesotho capital, on Friday.

The killings, according to the ANC statement issued on Saturday in Lusaka, Zambia, were the work of "a death squad of the Pretoria regime". The South African Army and police continue to deny responsibility.

Late on Friday a man calling himself Mphahle Mphahle, and claiming to be commander-in-chief of the Lesotho National Liberation Army, telephoned the South African Press Association to say that a unit of his organization had carried out the attack.

The ANC maintains that this claim is of "no relevance to the issue of the identity of the culprit" since the organization "is a mercenary formation within the South African Defence Force."

It is widely believed to operate from South African soil and is linked to underground political opponents of South Africa's autocratic Prime Minister, Chief Leaboa Jonathan, who has ruled without elections since 1970.

Despite Pretoria's denials of involvement in the Maseru raid, it appears to be the only realistic culprit. The killings were ruthless and professional and did not have the hallmark of the ragamuffin Lesotho National Liberation Army.

● LUANDA: An Angolan Army officer said on Friday that 4,000 South African troops had entered Southern Angola and that another 4,000 were concentrated across the border (NYT reports).

Backed by armoured cars and helicopters, the South African forces started occupying a 20-mile strip of Southern Angola on December 2 and reached their present troop level on Wednesday, the officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Roberto Ngongo, deputy chief of staff of Angola's armed forces, said in an interview.

Individual parties supporting it are planning to march on the Mochi gate in the wall round the old city of Lahore, each coming from a different direction. The regime was taken by surprise by a similar demonstration earlier this year, when as many as 50,000 protesters gathered for a noisy meeting condemning it.

Last night, Air Marshal Asghar Khan, the leader of the Tehrik-i-Islami party, condemned the arrests. "It clearly seems that there has been no change in the attitude of the Government towards civil liberties and fundamental rights, and even after the lifting of martial law the civil government is likely to continue with the present policy of suppression of civil liberties," he said.

Mr Dawit had variously been reported in New York, New Jersey, and in Orange, New Jersey, where he is said to be an official with the Ethiopian Mission to the United Nations, was said to live.

"I am now on vacation he said, and I am in touch with the Ethiopian Mission to the United Nations. I have not requested political asylum."

Ethiopian relief leader denies US asylum bid

From Ian Murray Jerusalem

New York (NYT) The head of the Ethiopian Government famine relief programme, Mr Dawit Wolde Giorgis, has denied that he is seeking asylum in the United States.

In a telephone interview, he said he was on holiday in the United States, but declined to say whether he planned to return to Ethiopia. He refused to say where he was other than to acknowledge that he was in the US.

Mr Dawit had variously been reported in New York, New Jersey, and in Orange, New Jersey, where he is said to be an official with the Ethiopian Mission to the United Nations, was said to live.

"I am now on vacation he said, and I am in touch with the Ethiopian Mission to the United Nations. I have not requested political asylum."

Bible researcher dates the First Noel to 12BC

From Ian Murray Jerusalem

The First Noel, a truthful angel would say, was not on December 25, and it was almost certainly more than 1,985 years ago.



Ringo Starr, the former Beatle, and his wife Barbara taking a break from play in the fourth world elephant polo championships in Nepal.

Fifth chess challenge game drawn

From Ian Murray, Jerusalem

The fifth game of the Kasparov-Tinman chess challenge match in Hilversum, Holland, was drawn.

In an apparently level situation, Tinman, the top Western grandmaster, had obtained pressure as compensation for a pawn.

But Kasparov surprisingly sacrificed his rook for a White bishop.

After five games in the six-game series, Kasparov leads by three points to two. White Tinman. Black Kasparov.

Ray Lopez opening

1 P4 P4 2 P4 P4 3 P4 P4 4 P4 P4 5 P4 P4 6 P4 P4 7 P4 P4 8 P4 P4 9 P4 P4 10 P4 P4 11 P4 P4 12 P4 P4 13 P4 P4 14 P4 P4 15 P4 P4 16 P4 P4 17 P4 P4 18 P4 P4 19 P4 P4 20 P4 P4 21 P4 P4 22 P4 P4 23 P4 P4 24 P4 P4 25 P4 P4 26 P4 P4 27 P4 P4 28 P4 P4 29 P4 P4 30 P4 P4 31 P4 P4 32 P4 P4 33 P4 P4 34 P4 P4 35 P4 P4 36 P4 P4 37 P4 P4 38 P4 P4 39 P4 P4 40 P4 P4 41 P4 P4 42 P4 P4 43 P4 P4 44 P4 P4 45 P4 P4 46 P4 P4 47 P4 P4 48 P4 P4 49 P4 P4 50 P4 P4 51 P4 P4 52 P4 P4 53 P4 P4 54 P4 P4 55 P4 P4 56 P4 P4 57 P4 P4 58 P4 P4 59 P4 P4 60 P4 P4 61 P4 P4 62 P4 P4 63 P4 P4 64 P4 P4 65 P4 P4 66 P4 P4 67 P4 P4 68 P4 P4 69 P4 P4 70 P4 P4 71 P4 P4 72 P4 P4 73 P4 P4 74 P4 P4 75 P4 P4 76 P4 P4 77 P4 P4 78 P4 P4 79 P4 P4 80 P4 P4 81 P4 P4 82 P4 P4 83 P4 P4 84 P4 P4 85 P4 P4 86 P4 P4 87 P4 P4 88 P4 P4 89 P4 P4 90 P4 P4 91 P4 P4 92 P4 P4 93 P4 P4 94 P4 P4 95 P4 P4 96 P4 P4 97 P4 P4 98 P4 P4 99 P4 P4 100 P4 P4

Draw agreed.

Research begins, naturally enough, with the New Testament version of the first Christmas, which is mentioned only in the Gospels of St Matthew and St Luke.

St Matthew (Chapter 2, verse 1) fixes it as during the reign of Herod, St Luke says it was at a time when Caesar Augustus ruled in Rome and called for all the world to be taxed, and when Cyrenus was governor in Syria (Chapter 2, verses 1 and 2).

According to the nearest thing to a contemporary account, by Josephus, the Jewish historian writing towards the end of the first century AD, Herod died in what we call 4 BC. The only well-known census and taxing organized by Cyrenus, however, was in 6 AD. The two dates do not coincide.

It is here that Mr Fleming has re-reared carefully the relevant verse in St Luke and

Israel swallows its pride to mollify US

From Ian Murray, Jerusalem

The United States appears to have forgiven Israel for the spying incident involving a US Navy intelligence analyst, but good relations between the two have been restored only at considerable cost to Israeli pride.

Newspapers yesterday revealed smouldering resentment at the outcome of the affair, which ended only when Israel allowed its intelligence officers to be interrogated, handed back documents, and agreed to disband the unit responsible.

A long statement from the US Senate Department on Friday made clear that Israel accepted that the inquiry should be reopened if further evidence was needed to try Mr Jonathan Pollard, the analyst accused of spying.

The facts were kept secret or censored heavily when the press tried to go into the subject. However, the Israeli version of why it employed Mr Pollard is now being leaked carefully.

According to this, he contacted the Israeli Embassy in Washington saying he was appointed as a contact to supply information. That information was first about Arab forces, the kind of material Israel expects under information exchange agreements with the US.

But Mr Pollard is said to have started charging for information about American assessments of Israel's defence. This appeared to be based on material which could have been given to America only by an

authorized Israeli source. Mr Pollard was thus kept on the payroll in an attempt to discover who was leaking secret Israeli information to the US.

True or not, the story is part of a scenario being presented to show that Israel was neither as bad nor as stupid as American statements indicate. America

Another spy scandal, the eleventh this year, has raised serious doubts about the security of secret sessions in the House of Representatives. (Christopher Thomas writes from Washington.)

Randy Jeffries, aged 26, a former FBI clerk, now a messenger for a company that transcribes secret sessions in the House, has been charged with spying for the Soviet Union. He will appear in court in Washington today.

has in turn been widely accused of spying on Israel, and of an even more serious offence: a correspondent of the Jerusalem Post said yesterday that Israeli developments on American weapons were now being supplied by the US in export orders to Arab countries.

All this is part of a growing Israeli worry about its heavy dependence on Washington. Without American aid, currently running at \$3 billion (22 billion) a year, the budget cannot balance. Without sophisticated American weapons the armed forces would quickly lose their edge over the Arabs.

Air Force bomb plot alleged in Nigeria

Lagos (Reuters) - The plotters of a coup failed last week to kill Nigeria's military leader, General Ibrahim Babangida, with a bomb planted on his plane, the independent newspaper Tribune reported.

The paper said the plotters had enlisted the support of senior Air Force officers to plant the bomb. Other targets were Commodore Ebita Liwe, Nigeria's number two man, and General Sani Abacha, the Army chief.

US says drugs ring smashed

Newark, New Jersey (AFP) - The US Justice Department said it had cracked a multi-million-dollar drug trafficking network, arresting four people in the US and The Netherlands, including a man who described himself to narcotics agents as the world's biggest hashish dealer.

The alleged ring leader, Mr Stanley Esser of The Netherlands, was picked up in Amsterdam with a Pakistani, Mr Abdul Wali, said to be his associate. Mr Esser's lawyer, Mr Martien Roefien, and a Lebanese doctor, Mr Ahmad Saleh el-Ahmar, were arrested in a Newark bar on Friday.

Soviet stowaway

Paris (AP) - A 30-year-old Russian said he spent 10 days without food or water in a wooden crate in a Soviet cargo ship before swimming ashore to seek asylum when the ship docked in Rouen.

Treasure bared

Salonica, Greece (Reuters) - Thousands of people queued to see gold, frankincense and myrrh that Orthodox Christians believe to be the first gifts received by the baby Jesus which went on display here for the first time in 432 years.

Epidemic toll

Delhi (AFP) - More than 200 people have died in Madras in an epidemic of a rare water-borne disease that broke out after flash floods last month, the Press Trust of India said.

Spying arrest

Karlsruhe, West Germany (Reuters) - A self-employed West German businessman has been arrested on suspicion of spying for Germany's Federal Prosecutor's Office said. No more details were given.

Dhaka strike

Dhaka (Reuters) - More than 40,000 doctors, engineers and agricultural experts began an indefinite strike in Bangladesh for better pay and higher status.

13 to hang

Islamabad (AP) - Thirteen men were sentenced to hang on charges of killing two men in a long-running family feud in Sahawal, eastern Pakistan.

González Nato line wins party support

From Richard Wigg Madrid

Señor Felipe González, the Spanish Prime Minister, has committed his Socialist Party militants to campaign for a "yes" in the Nato referendum promised for March.

His tough line came with the announcement that Lord Carlington, the Nato Secretary-General, will be in Madrid on January 2 and 3 for talks with the Government.

Responding to appeals from Señor González and five Cabinet colleagues for discipline, only 21 anti-Nato and left-wingers on the 162-member party federal committee at the weekend rejected the Government's line that Spanish interests are better defended by staying in Nato.

The majority has now to convince Spaniards who voted socialist at the 1982 general election on an anti-Nato platform that important policy change is correct.

Señor Pablo Castellano, who leads the anti-Nato rebels in the party, indicated yesterday, however, that while they will still "vote in conscience" in the referendum, they will neither take part in the pro-Nato campaign nor join the communists, pacifists and extra-parliamentary left while opposing it.

Señor Castellano told the Prime Minister that, by joining

one of the power blocs, Spain's socialist party was abandoning one of its basic tenets.

The real significance of the weekend meeting, at which the party's new defence policy, called "peace and security", was debated for 10 hours, is in the decision earlier this month by the right-wing opposition, led by Señor Manuel Fraga, to tell its supporters to abstain in the Nato poll.

His hopes dashed for a national consensus with Señor Fraga on Nato, Señor González now alone faces the rank and file of his party and the electorate.

His supporters at the party meeting castigated the opposition for risking by their abstention, Spain's having to leave Nato if the referendum is lost.

Socialist leaders are gambling on their supporters and sympathizers, however disenchanted about Nato, shunning the vote and giving Señor González the blow of a lost referendum in what will in effect be a general election.

The voters could, however, make a protest vote over Nato and the way "their" Government has performed in office - and yet still return the Socialist Party at a general election.

Crowds blame Madrid for Basque's death

From Richard Wigg, Madrid

Crowds took to the streets of Pamplona and San Sebastian at the weekend, accusing Spain's Socialist Government of allowing police to torture detainees.

They were protesting against the death of a Basque, Señor Mikel Zabala, aged 32, who had been in police custody.

The crowd in Pamplona was estimated at 20,000, and the tens of thousands who paraded through San Sebastian on Saturday were said to represent the biggest turnout there for several years.

Señor Zabala's fiancée, giving the family's version, told demonstrators in both cities: "They tortured him to death in the civil guard barracks, and those of us who survived might

well have died too". She had been held in the barracks at the same time, but was later released without charge.

Señor Zabala's body, still handcuffed, was taken from a river near the French frontier on December 15, 19 days after he had been taken from his home.

The continuing force of the demonstrations in northern Spain shows that the Government has lost the struggle with public opinion.

The setback suffered by the Government over the Zabala case was recognized at the weekend by the Madrid delegate in the Basque region, Señor Ramon Jauregui, who reports to the Interior Ministry.

Colombia envoy recalled from Nicaragua

From Geoffrey Matthews Bogotá

Colombia recalled its ambassador from Nicaragua at the weekend for "urgent consultations" as relations between the two countries reached a crisis point.

Charges of Sandinista involvement in the Palace of Justice siege in Bogotá last month mounted as three former Colombian foreign ministers urged President Betancur to break off diplomatic relations with Managua if Nicaraguan involvement was proved.

Such action would deal a devastating blow to the Central American peace initiatives of the Contadora group, which Colombia forms with Mexico, Venezuela and Panama.

Colombia's Ambassador in Managua, Señor Abelardo Duarte Sotelo, was recalled to Bogotá on Saturday. This was followed by reports that the Sandinista Government was recalling its ambassador, Señor Francisco Quirinos, but later a spokesman at the Nicaraguan Embassy said he was still in Bogotá.

Earlier, Señor Quirinos had described charges of Nicaraguan involvement in the siege as slanderous.

Military team to monitor Ugandan ceasefire

From Charles Harrison, Nairobi

Tanzania and Kenya are sending a small military reconnaissance team to Uganda this week to prepare to monitor the ceasefire between the Ugandan army and the National Resistance Army (NRA) guerrillas. It will also monitor the disarming (and eventual demobilization) of a large part of the armed forces.

Five Kenya Army officers who arrived in Kampala at the weekend, are to be followed by a team from Tanzania. The agreement between the ruling Military Council and the NRA provides for these moves, and there were consultations at the weekend between the president of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.

Uganda has as its two neighbours, plus Canada and Britain, to help by monitoring the ceasefire and the formation of a new and better-trained army.

Britain declined to join the monitoring, but is ready to help with training, and with the advice to the Military Council. Major-General Tony Pollard, former commander of the School of Infantry at Warminster, has been here for several weeks preparing to lead the training operation.

The peace agreement signed last Tuesday provides for an immediate ceasefire, to end the fighting between the Ugandan army and the NRA. It appears that the ceasefire has been largely effective, but Ugandan army soldiers have been looting and killing in the Kampala area.

Kampala is due to be demilitarized, with all troops moved out of the city.

The Military Council chairman, General Tito Okello, is addressing public rallies in eastern and northern Uganda, urging people to support the peace agreement.

Mr Yoweri Museveni, the NRA leader, left Nairobi last week to return to south-west Uganda, where most of his forces are located. He has made no move to go to Kampala, and has not been seen there since early 1981, when he went underground to lead a campaign to overthrow the Obote Government (which was toppled in a military coup in July).

Uganda has appointed Mr Henry Kayondo, a lawyer, as Ugandan High Commissioner to London, replacing Mr Shafiq Arain, a Ugandan-born Asian and supporter of ex-president Obote, who resigned after Dr Obote's overthrow.

Russia seeks a political settlement to lift millstone of Afghanistan

By Nicholas Ashford, Diplomatic Correspondent

The fighting goes on, but neither the Soviet-backed regime in Kabul nor the swelling ranks of resistance forces appears to be gaining any significant military advantage. The talks go on too, but progress has been painfully slow and now seems deadlocked over the crucial issue of how negotiations on a Soviet withdrawal should be conducted.

All the while, the body counts on both sides continue to spiral upwards, although not as fast as civilian casualties.

The situation is not entirely static, however. The Russians have begun dropping heavy bombs, notably during the Reagan-Gorbachev summit in Geneva, that they wish to see a political settlement of the Afghan crisis.

Several factors have contributed to this apparent shift in Moscow. The first is that despite the deployment of more than 115,000 men, including some of its best troops, the Soviet Union has been unable to pacify the country. Like the British before them, they are finding out the hard way that Afghanistan is unconquerable.

Nor have the Russians succeeded in getting their Afghan allies to expand their authority within the country.

The Afghan Army is in a shambles and has lost half of its original 80,000 manpower through casualties or defections. Attempts by the Babrak Karmal regime to extend its political

On Christmas Eve 1979 heavy transport planes from the Soviet Union carrying 5,000 troops rumbled into Kabul airport, heralding the start of the occupation of Afghanistan. Three days later, the KGB assassinated President Hafizullah Amin, but his replacement by Babrak Karmal served only to intensify the fierce anti-communist resistance of thousands of *mujahideen* guerrilla fighters. Six years on, there is little sign of an end to the brutal conflict.

hold on the country by convening a plethora of tribal *jirgas* (councils) do not appear to have had much success.

Internationally, the stigma of being involved in what is widely perceived as a war of repression is beginning to hurt. Last month the United Nations General Assembly voted by 122 to 19 with 12 abstentions for a resolution calling for a withdrawal of foreign troops. It was the largest-ever vote against the Soviet presence in Afghanistan.

Several other organizations, among them the Commonwealth and the Non-Aligned Movement, have called on Soviet Union to remove its forces as part of a political settlement.

It is the question of a troop withdrawal which has dogged the UN-sponsored "proximity" talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan in Geneva, the sixth round of which ended last week.

The talks have produced broad agreement on three issues - a bilateral accord on non-interference (which means that Pakistan would agree to stop support reaching Afghan resistance forces on the border

between the two countries), international guarantees to oversee a settlement, and the voluntary return of three million Afghan refugees from Pakistan.

However, the Afghan regime is insisting that the fourth (and key) issue - a Soviet withdrawal - can only be resolved by direct talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Islamabad, which wants Kabul to present a clear timetable for the withdrawal, says Afghanistan wants direct talks only to win international recognition.

Whether the deadlock can be broken at the next round of talks in the spring remains to be seen. Although it is increasingly apparent that Moscow would like to rid itself of its Afghan millstone it will, in the view of Western analysts, only agree to pull out if it can be sure it will leave behind a friendly and stable government in Kabul.

Given the traditional volatility of Afghan politics and the bitterness which six years of Soviet occupation had evoked, it is hard to see how Moscow's concerns could be satisfied.

Soviet casualties mount as rebel defiance grows

From Michael Hamlyn, Delhi

The war in Afghanistan has been "geographicalised", according to Western observers, but despite this process, the Russian occupation force is having no greater success against the *Mujahidin* rebels.

Western diplomats reporting in Delhi have identified the hand of the new Russian leadership in a more wholehearted commitment to the fighting, expressed in a willingness to take increased risks, and a more straightforward control of the strategy and tactics of the war from Moscow. At the same time the increased supply of men and more sophisticated weapons to the rebels has negated both these advantages.

The new commitment and the increased risks have resulted in growing Soviet casualties, and the simplifying of the lines of command. But it has brought increased war material and more significant sea-piercing operations, it has not faced any better than when control was carried out via the Soviet HQ in Tashkent, and a visit twice a year from the Defence Ministry in Moscow.

As the anniversary of the Soviet invasion arrives, the occupying troops are still having difficulty maintaining the policy they set themselves at the start of the rebel campaign, which was to hold on to the cities and to maintain control of the main roads, letting the countryside look after itself.

Western diplomats indicate that control of the towns is still as tenuous as ever, and that many of the main roads are still regularly cut. Reports this week from Afghanistan show, for example, that the Kandahar to Kabul road was cut several times by guerrillas, despite a pincer movement of Soviet and Afghan troops along it trying to clear the rebels away. The key

supply route from the Soviet border via the Salang tunnel is regularly interrupted by raids - most recently on convoys carrying fuel, both paraffin and bottled gas, which have resulted in an acute shortage in the capital.

In the western town of Herat, which began the year calmly enough, travellers say that as many as 70 per cent of the buildings have been destroyed. As the campaigning season

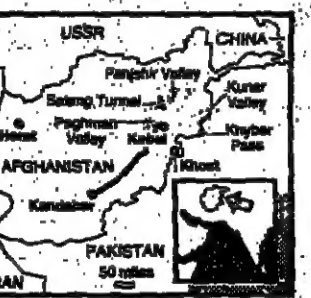
opposing forces have caused heavy casualties among both the guerrillas and the Afghan armed forces.

In Kabul similarly, a major offensive aimed at preventing access to the city from the south and west by the guerrillas was put into operation in the autumn in the Paghman Valley. Diplomats were able to observe some of the fighting at first hand as they went out to the golf course in the west of the city on their Friday outings.

Nevertheless, the guerrilla attacks within the city have continued. This month a number of bombs have gone off at public buildings including the airport and the Polytechnic University. This and other attacks at the airport have raised some fears for the safety of young Britons flying out to India by the cheapest route, which involves a stop at Kabul. The route is particularly popular among Sikhs because there is a direct link to Amritsar in Punjab.

The supply routes carrying men and weapons from neighbouring Pakistan were the target of a direct assault by the Russians during the year with major campaigns to clear the Kunar Valley and the area around the border town of Khost. These campaigns were highly successful for a time, but eventually the Soviet columns withdrew, leaving the situation much as it had been to begin with.

The continued supply of sophisticated weapons including surface to air missiles has meant that the Soviet mastery of the air has not gone unchallenged in recent battles. Helicopter downings, which have been freely claimed by the *Mujahidin* in the past have now been attested to by many more independently reliable sources.



opened with the return of summer weather heavy fighting took place at night. By the middle of the year the Governor's office had been captured in a daylight raid, and three delegates to the high tribal *jirga* in Kabul were killed.

The Russians countered by flattening the outlying villages, to give themselves a free field of fire, to prevent the inhabitants leaving, and to destroy any cover for approaching guerrillas. In August the Russians encircled the city, which had been virtually in the hands of the rebels, and serious fighting began as the *Mujahidin* withdrew. Reports suggested that more than 70 Afghan soldiers were killed at this time.

But, in spite of this, the town continues to be plagued with *Mujahidin* attacks. A daytime curfew was imposed by the Russians in November, and confrontations between the



Clouds of black smoke darken the sky as a fireman sprays foam on the fire.

Naples oil fire still blazing

Naples (AP, AFP) - Smoke blotted out the sun over Naples yesterday as fires continued in an oil storage depot where an explosion killed four people and injured 250, 18 of them critically.

More than 700 firefighters worked through the night to subside the fire that sent out clouds of black smoke for a second day, forcing some 2,000 people to leave their homes. Officials said most managed to find shelter for the night with relatives or at hotels arranged

by emergency workers. The fire that engulfed two dozen large oil storage tanks was pronounced under control yesterday by the Ministry of Civil Protection, which is co-ordinating efforts at the scene. "But the fire is continuing, feeding on the fuel", a spokesman said.

The authorities deny that the huge clouds of black smoke could have a harmful effect on local inhabitants or on the environment: "the atmospheric conditions are favourable, and

our experts are adamant that the smoke is not a health risk".

The cause of the explosion is still not known. Several witnesses have said there was a very strong smell of petrol shortly before the dawn explosion.

Engineers at the depot argued on technical grounds that the fire must have been started deliberately. But another theory is that safety regulations could have been breached while oil was being unloaded from a tanker.

California offers foetal blood scan

From Ivor Davis, Los Angeles

A genetic screening programme, the first of its kind in the United States, will offer pregnant women in California a blood test to detect any serious defect in the foetus.

The programme will start next month and requires obstetricians and pregnancy clinics to provide patients with a brochure, printed in several languages, to persuade them to take the test.

The brochure will advise women found to be carrying malformed foetuses on where to go for abortions, or special medical treatment if they wish to continue the pregnancy. All expectant mothers will be asked to sign a statement agreeing to take the test.

Genetic screening programmes have raised social and political controversy because the choice of aborting malformed foetuses is implicit.

There is also scientific controversy because the blood test is not always accurate. The test will be offered to women seen in the first 2 weeks of pregnancy. Health officials expect that it will prove negative in about 95 per cent of cases.

● MINNEAPOLIS: Mrs Mary Lund, aged 40, the first woman given an artificial heart, was in critical but stable condition here. Doctors gave her a 50-50 chance of living, since the pump was "functioning very well". A Jarvik-7 model was implanted on Wednesday to serve until a human heart becomes available.

Reagan retreats after Shultz lie test threat

From Christopher Thomas, Washington

President Reagan has curtailed sharply his order for widespread lie detector tests on Government employees after blunt objections by Mr George Shultz, his Secretary of State.

After meeting Mr Shultz, who had threatened to resign if he had to take a polygraph test, Mr Reagan authorized a White House statement saying that the tests would be required only as "a limited though sometimes useful tool when used in conjunction with other investi-

gative and security procedures in espionage cases".

That is a clear retreat from the original intention of his order which authorized examinations of "all individuals" with access to highly classified information whether or not they were suspected of spying.

Administration officials said that in practice Cabinet members now would have discretion about whether to approve the tests on individuals in their departments.

Zimbabwe police chief given bail

From Jan Raath, Harare

Zimbabwe's Commissioner of Police, Mr Wiridzayi Nguvuru, and a deputy commissioner Mr Govati Mhora, who were dismissed for corruption last week, have appeared before magistrates here and released on bail.

Mr Robert Mugabe, the Prime Minister, said on Thursday that two had been dismissed in view of the findings of a commission of inquiry whose report would show "the depth of immorality" to which they had sunk. They were arrested within hours.

Charges they will face include theft from police custody of 50,000 tablets of the soporific drug Mandrax, worth £50,000. Neither man was charged formally. But their lawyer said that they would plead guilty. They will face eight joint charges and Mr Nguvuru a further eight.

One charge of interfering in police investigation implicates the former Zimbabwe High Commissioner to London Mr Robert Zvinoira, who was at the centre of a scandal over his purchase of an exorbitantly expensive official residence without authorization. Mr Zvinoira was found guilty of foreign currency offences after his return to Harare.

It is alleged that Mr Mhora and Mr Nguvuru improperly ordered Mr Zvinoira's release from jail after he had been arrested for failing to meet bail conditions.

Mr Nguvuru will be charged with criminal injury for having allegedly ordered an office worker to remove her briefs, his own regulation khaki shorts to his knees. "The complainant, in anger and shame, ran out of his office, shouting," the senior public prosecutor Mr Augustine Chikunda, said.

Confusion after Ji visit Hong Kong dilemma over impetus towards democracy

From David Bonavia, Hong Kong

Mr Ji Pengfei, a senior Chinese statesman, has created more confusion than confidence following his 12-day visit to Hong Kong.

Mr Ji, head of the Peking Office for Hong Kong and Macao Affairs, leaves behind a near-vacuum for British policy making in Hong Kong over the next 11 years.

The words "lame duck" are being used increasingly to describe the position of the British-dominated government.

The former Chinese Foreign Minister made clear during his visit that in Chinese eyes the British do not have the right to set up democratic institutions of internal home rule which will survive the transfer of sovereignty in 1997.

This leaves the Hong Kong Government and Britain in a quandary about whether they should continue or halt the process of democratization of the territory's legislature through indirect, and later direct, elections.

Mr Ji, the most senior Chinese communist leader to make an official visit to Hong Kong, spent most of his time sightseeing and attending receptions.

The Chinese position is that negotiations over Hong Kong's future should be conducted exclusively between China and Britain, with the territory's people being allowed to voice their views only informally.

He offended unofficial and elected members of the Executive and Legislative Councils by refusing to meet them formally as a group representing the aspirations of the people of Hong Kong. And he drew strong criticism from the local media for refusing to hold a live press conference.

At a press conference last Saturday Mr Ji answered only five questions, which had been submitted two days in advance, and refused to respond to supplementary questions.

He emphasized that the basic law for the future Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China would determine the shape of political institutions after 1997. This law is being drafted in Peking with only a relatively small number of Hong Kong public figures taking any part in the work of the drafting committee.

Hong Kong's right to interpret the basic law would be discussed after it was enacted. The Peking Government had no "concrete design, blueprint or fixed preconception".

Mr Ji concluded: "after 1997 the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region will still maintain its freedom of speech, publications and press, and on the premise of abiding by and not violating Special Administrative Region laws, various kinds of media and publishing organizations can engage freely in their work and activities."

MPs criticized for failing colony

By Donald Macintyre

A strong attack on some British politicians for having failed to consider the insecurities of the Hong Kong community has been made by Mr Jimmy McGregor, director of the colony's General Chamber of Commerce.

He said it was "idiotic" of Mr Robert Adley, a Conservative MP and chairman of the Sino-British Parliamentary Committee, to claim that concern was being whipped up by a "few people" trying to poison the atmosphere.

He said there had been widespread disappointment that Lord Young of Grafton, Secretary of State for Employment, who was the guest of the Chamber at a lunch last Wednesday, had not looked at the political problems in his speech, which praised the colony's economic system as an example to Britain.

Mr McGregor defended Emily Lau, the *Far Eastern*

Economic Review Hong Kong correspondent, who has been pressing for democratic reforms in Hong Kong and was named specifically in Mr Adley's attack last week.

Mr McGregor, who has lived in the colony for 35 years and whose wife is Chinese, said Lau was a highly qualified investigative journalist. "For a senior MP like Mr Adley to come here and make such daft statements is really beyond the pale."

Mr McGregor, who is widely respected as a community spokesman in Hong Kong and was formerly a high-ranking official of the colonial government, made clear that he had some personal sympathy for the case being advocated by Mr Martin Lee, QC, a prominent Hong Kong barrister, and others, for 25 per cent of seats to the Legislative Council to be elected directly as a means of preserving Hong Kong's way of life.

Smell beats fir thieves

From Alan McGregor, Geneva

The Swiss saying that Christmas trees straight from the forest are so much greener and sweeter is being disproved with malicious pleasure by foresters.

An ecologically harmless chemical product used to spray young firs to prevent deer nibbling tender sprouts has a nauseating odour resembling canine excreta if exposed to indoor temperatures.

So after decades of losing prime firs, from five to 15 years old, felled by chop-and-run motorists, the foresters this year have sprayed it all over young trees near roads and tracks.

Even if selecting a tree from the forest remains something of a tradition in Switzerland, it has to be done with stealth and speed. Anyone doing it repeatedly risks a £1,600 fine.

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Dishonour ends career of sumo official

Tokyo - Japan's national sport, sumo wrestling, is reeling from a scandal with its hallowed administrative system (David Watts writes). For the first time in its modern history a sumo stable-master has been forced to resign because of misconduct. Wajima, aged 37, a former grand champion, sat cross-legged at the weekend with his head bowed before the wrestlers of his stable, to apologize for dishonouring the name of sumo as his resignation was accepted by the Japan Sumo Association. Sumo contains many elements of Japanese spiritual belief. Wajima has undermined the image of a sport untroubled by the commercial world, by taking large loans.

Law student triumphs in Assam poll

Gauhati (AP) - A law student was elected yesterday as leader of the new state Government in Assam, headed by a regional party that routed Mr Rajiv Gandhi's Congress (I) Party in special elections.

Mr Prafulla Kumar Mahanta, who is 32, and is likely to be sworn in as chief minister today or tomorrow, will be the first student head of an Indian state government.

He was chosen unanimously to head the new administration at a meeting of the Asom Gana Parishad (Assam People's Council). The 63 newly-elected state Deputies met at a government guest house in Gauhati, Assam's main city.

Mr Mahanta, a bearded law student at Gauhati University, led a six-year protest demanding the expulsion of more than a

million Bengali-speaking Bangladeshi immigrants. Assamese complain that the refugee influx threatens to swamp them culturally and economically.

The elections in Assam followed a peace accord between Mr Gandhi, the Indian Prime Minister, and anti-alien agitators led by Mr Mahanta, who was formerly president of the All-Assam Students Union.

The settlement calls for a 10-year disenfranchisement of settlers who entered Assam illegally between 1966 and 1971 and expulsion of those who came after the 1971 Bangladesh war of independence.

Nearly all of the senior Parishad leaders are young men, many of them still students in the oil-rich state of 22 million people in north-western India.

Mr Mahanta earlier said that expulsion of aliens would be a top priority of the new state government.

The elections ended nearly three years of rule in Assam by the Congress Party, which was installed after state elections in 1983 boycotted by most Assamese Hindus. According to Government figures more than 3,600 people were killed in election-related violence.

According to the final returns, the Parishad won 63 of the 125 state Assembly seats and seven of the 14 national parliamentary constituencies. It also has the support in the new legislature of three independent Congress, which won 90 of the 108 Assembly seats in 1983, won in only 25 districts. It also took four parliamentary seats.



Are they being less than frank?

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THE ARTS

At 85, Geoffrey Household remains a masterful writer of thrillers, as his new *Arrows of Desire* testifies: interview by Caroline Moorehead

Picaresque adventurer

What is it, precisely, that Geoffrey Household writes? Not thrillers, he says, the word "entertainment", he says, would be acceptable, "except that, there you are, Graham Greene has pinched it." Household, when he can, settles for the picaresque. "Take a man... a woman too is useful, though I think it's a masculine word which I think is a bit unfair, put him in a tight spot with enemies and watch him win through. If it works properly you can't put it down. It lends itself to beauty."

Household has just celebrated his eighty-fifth birthday with the publication of another decidedly picaresque novel, *Arrows of Desire*, and the reissuing of two of his most admired books, *A Rough Shoot* and *Watcher in the Shadows*. Even he has trouble labelling these. "When I went to see him he had a typed sheet of paper waiting for me. On it, neatly divided into Novels, Picaresque and Adventures, were the titles of 21 books. *A Rough Shoot* and *Watcher in the Shadows* were under Adventures. What then is an Adventure?"

"Well, the difference between me and a deliberate thriller writer is that he works out a plot, while my hero moves from adventure to adventure. When I sit down and start all I know is the beginning and the end. If you must have it, I suppose they are thrillers, but done my way. And how is that different from the Picaresque? "All my adventures are slightly picaresque, but the absolutely pure ones are *Fellow Passenger* and *The Lives and Times of Bernardo Brown*, in which men are suspected of doing something they haven't done."

So where does the novel fit? "That's a simple human story, with action, but no violence necessarily. It's not deliberately meant to excite. A novel is a novel; it can be written by anyone." Ten minutes of courteous and charming explanations left me just as baffled. All that he said with certainty is that Household himself greatly prefers what he calls Picaresque, men in false positions or tight spots, that he admires *Don Quixote*

and Fielding and Defoe, but not the books of Ambler and Forsyth, which bore him, but that as a writer "knowing I've got to eat and that picaresque isn't very popular, I have to be careful."

Three months ago Household and his wife Ilona moved from Aylesbury, where they had spent the last 30 years in a farmhouse, to a small, thatched cottage in a village near the Cotswolds. The thatch, curiously formed like a deep brown trout with a bump, makes the house look like a loaf of bread; at the back, the Households have added a new sitting-room overlooking what will be a fine garden and herbaceous border, once spring comes and Household can resume the pottering in the garden which has always broken up his working days.

He is writing a volume of short stories. "In pencil I drive a sort of plot tunnel through the underground darkness of the imagination," he once wrote. His method remains the same: two to three hours in the morning with his pencil, rewriting and typing up for a couple of hours in the late afternoon, "the rest of the time sitting around, wondering what I'm going to write next". That is, until the dreaded 50-page mark is passed and the book has taken off, then "it's six hours a day and enjoying it, really enjoying it."

Household is whiskery and tweedy, with soft white hair and a small moustache, considerably more affable than his austere heroes, he has blue eyes that are both pale and bright and the pleased smile of someone who has fun.

His life breaks in two parts: the first 45 years, from birth in Gloucestershire, son of the Director of Education, to the end of the Second World War, are of movement; the next 40, of writing when, "extremely pleased to be home at last", he settled with his wife and three children to an existence he says is possibly lonely, but that he is by nature rather lonely. An unsuccessful schoolboy, noted only for his verse, he became an able

undergraduate at Oxford and emerged with a First in English Literature but with a strong feeling that in being too young for the 1914-1918 war he had missed something. The literary life appeared dull to him. So, when a friend found him a job with the management of the Bank of Romania, he took the Orient Express to Bucharest, where he discovered that his "rock solid pounds" bought him the best lunch in Europe for the equivalent of half-a-crown and where he soon felt as if he were turning into P. G. Wodehouse's Bertie Wooster.

Now came years that might have been lived by any Household hero and indeed were, since so many are men of his own world. From Bucharest he joined Elders and Fyffes, importers of bananas into Europe; for them he went to Spain with instructions to make the Spaniards eat their own Canary bananas and stop competing for the European market. (He came back with an enduring feeling for classlessness, something he maintains only the Spaniards truly understand.)

America came next and work for a children's encyclopedia, before the best years of all, selling printing inks for John Kidd throughout Europe and South America. "I liked the people I met. I liked the stuff I was selling. There were moments of immense pleasure, mucking around." Household's was in the same vein: attached first to the secret Military Mission to Romania, later to Field Security in Cairo and Greece. It made up for missing the First World War.

Where did all this leave him? "I have reached, in my profession, only a rank equivalent to a wartime major general," he wrote in his autobiography, *Against the Wind*. "Among that is, the first two hundred, any of whom may as easily be retired to discomfort as advanced to higher authority." The war over, higher authority could have taken either form, for his work in intelligence had been valued, while two pre-war books, *The Third Hour* and *The Salvation of Pisco Gabar*, had been extremely successful.



The reception of *Rogue Male*, published as war broke out, was uncertain, despite a much praised film, *Manhunt*, with Walter Pidgeon. Household, feeling European but longing for the English walks of his boyhood, opted for the literary world that had once seemed so dull. "The older I get," he says now, "the more I see that I was a writer from the beginning." He thought about style, about Conrad and Osbert Sitwell, about not wanting to be compared to John Buchan, whose novels he likes,

but says they are quite unlike his own (they are full of coincidences and all of Buchan's heroes belong to the Establishment), and about how he would really prefer to be writing short stories, were there a market for them. He settled down and began work. There were rough patches, but few after *Rogue Male* was republished in the early 1960s and Household, by now widely read on both sides of the Atlantic, became, as one critic put it, "the expert in the art of la chasse humaine".

PUBLISHING

Literary censorship

The Bodley Head are the publishers of *Little Black Sambo*, one of the relatively few books in the world that, down the generations, has hooked children on the pleasures and rewards of literature and persuaded them to advance - or retreat - to other books and other authors.

Bodley Head's president is the one-time liberal director-general of the BBC, Sir Hugh Greene, and among the 13 other directors is James Michie, translator of libidinous Catullus. The director responsible for children's books, Margaret Clark, has been quoted as saying that Helen Bannerman's classic about chortles, tigers, pancares and crocodiles is "an anachronism - books like that which were perfectly acceptable years ago just don't fit into modern life."

In the USA, the publishers of *Huckleberry Finn* are reported as being about to tone down some of the language so that the sensibilities of certain readers - more likely, non-readers - are less likely to be offended. Back at the Bodley Head, *Little Black Sambo* is likely to go out of print in February and not be reprinted. This may be, of course, because the book until recently was published by Chatto & Windus and it was foisted, with the rest of the Chatto children's list, on Margaret Clark. Much of the nature of publishing is to do with editors being able to say that they spotted or recognized the potential of books. *Little Black Sambo* was recognized as classic before Ms Clark was born.

As the book is still in copyright (Helen Bannerman died as recently as 1946), presumably the rights will be gobbled up by another publisher more concerned with the intrinsic qualities of the book than in paying obedience to the self-righteous.

Books derived from the human imagination, of literary merit - and yes, *Little Black Sambo* is emphatically of literary and artistic merit - should not be demeaned by being treated as if they are tokens in a political jungle. If *Little Black Sambo* is brushed under the carpet, even banned, if Mark Twain's classic is watered down, what will be next? Will the credulous Othello have to have his lines rewritten for a White? The Bible and Shakespeare may be required reading on Richard Baker's inherited desert island but they certainly will not be available on the mainland to new (or old) readers.

This process, however it may be justified, is known as censorship.

The most enterprising publishing party of the year took place last month. Unfortunately, this column's invitation arrived after the occasion. Souvenir Press celebrated its twentieth anniversary of not attending the Frankfurt Book Fair. The champagne party was also "to resuscitate those who were eccentric enough to go. A registered nurse and ambulance will be on hand for anybody suffering from post-Frankfurt shock and depression."



From *Little Black Sambo*, by courtesy of Chatto & Windus

Next year's Frankfurt fair, the central event in the book trade's international calendar, will again take place during a Jewish holiday. The fair authorities (they would, wouldn't they?) explain, as is the way in such matters, that the stifling exhibition halls are only available on those dates. Meanwhile, Ernest Hecht of Souvenir Press and Sol Stein of the American house of Stein and Day are, by their non-appearance at Frankfurt each year, regarded more as eccentric than pragmatic.

The London book fair in 1986 will, for the last time, be held in the Kafkaesque interstices of the bowels of the Barbican. The ruse employed by an increasing number of British publishers is not to buy expensive, or even inexpensive, space wherein to proffer their wares - the dust wrappers of next season's masterpieces, finished copies between warping boards of last month's failures - but to wander the corridors as visitors, accusing foreign publishers known to them and hustling them away to the tranquillity of their offices where deals may be struck and contracts signed.

Ann Kritzinger's Scriptmatic has been deluged with manuscripts since I wrote a couple of months ago about its reading service for a fee. It now has a team of 80 freelance readers, qualified "in 59 categories of fiction and non-fiction" and thus is able to marry manuscripts to appropriate readers. Ms Kritzinger says: "All are professional writers and many are publishers' readers. Not all, of course, are kept busy - but if we had someone writing on goat-keeping or modern China we could deal with either."

One of Scriptmatic's readers is the novelist Nona Coxhead. You may not have heard of her but you may have heard of Kerl Hulme's *The Bone People*, haven't you? When it was received from New Zealand the future Booker Prize winner was sent to Ms Coxhead, one of Hodder & Stoughton's readers, for assessment. She suggested serious consideration after revision.

Maybe that is why Ms Coxhead was not sent a finished copy of the published book. But, as she chirpily says, "That's standard publishers' practice towards readers, but of course I'll buy one."

E. J. Craddock

Television

When critics are well worth watching

Saturday Review (BBC2) lotted last year, ridden at a brisk trot by two of its producers - John Archer and Kevin Loader. The idea was a good one: to cart away Lado's tested format of a studio discussion, topped and tailed by his view of the week and a short film feature, and apply this to the arts. In the process one or two things fell by the way (including, thank goodness, the idea of a second presenter).

The most important shift has been to encroach on the simple virtues of the three-part discussion. One of *Did You See* BAFTA-winning strengths was the careful, unexciting, cutting of its guests. In *Saturday*

Review they seem not only well-tried, but late-booked. The unexpected element has now been fragmented into a Steptoe-like jumble of seven-minute features (time to be neither polemical nor instructive). These features, like the discussions, are often not as mainstream as perhaps they should be, but under the relaxed guidance of Russell Davies - whose clothes must have been left on the set when it was painted - programme has nevertheless become consistently interesting. When it stops talking at the gates of *Arms* and finds more common ground, it will be very good indeed.

That said, *Saturday's* scratch-video look at the year

was first-rate. There are few things so watchable as three critics articulately airing their prejudices and weaknesses. The more so if one entertains the faint suspicion that A. N. Wilson, Christopher Rickes and Hermione Lee have not spent the year viewing *Rambo*, reading Dan Dare and bopping to Live Aid. On one thing all three agreed: 1985 has been a bad year for the arts. They had stood alone in a sea of standing ovations" (C.Rickes, after Geoffrey Hill). A.N. Wilson - wonderfully outspoken as ever - had even thought of defecting to Russia.

One of the highlights of the television year turned out to be *Shadowlands* (BBC1) by Bill

Nicholson - a dramatization of C.S. Lewis's marriage to a dying American divorcee. The BBC must be commended for showing this at the length it required for Lewis's bachelor love to grow, for the pain of his wife's illness to him. There were some longwinded and some wordy patches but, overall, Nicholson's careful symmetry touchingly opened the door to God's purpose and the place of suffering within it. Joss Ackland as the cardiganed inventor of Narnia and Claire Bloom as his wife were quite excellent - so too was David Waller as Lewis's mellow brother, David Thompson produced.

Nicholas Shakespeare

Theatre

Peter Pan Aldwych

During the long years of *Peter Pan's* enslavement to the Great Ormond Street Hospital, one used to hear mouth-watering accounts of the play's wonderful, unfettered life on Broadway with Mary Martin and Jean Arthur.

This transatlantic legend has now come home to roost in the form of a 1955 musical by Carolyn Leigh and Moose Charlap (with later additions from the Cornden, Green and Styne factory), which tips a barrel of treacle over the story, and omits such details as the lagoon scene, the return of Hook's crocodile, and the escape from the poisoned cake for the sake of accommodating about 20 unmemorable numbers whose message is well summed up in Miss Leigh's couplet: "Just think of lovely things/And your heart will fly on wings". On the whole, I think we were better off with the old conveyor-belt version at the Scala.

The most effective number consists of a hide-and-seek duel with Hook addressing an operatically ardent serenade to a spy young figure hidden behind a fan and mantilla. This goes with a swing and pushes the story along, but what sympathy for the captives have had with the play to imagine that Peter would ever impersonate a woman? Otherwise we get waltzes, tarantellas, and lull-

abies, all bringing the action to a halt and adding nothing to it except the clichés of commercial fantasy.

Roger Redfern's Plymouth Theatre Royal production, arriving at the Aldwych after a two-month tour, is a faithful projection of the Broadway version. It is extremely efficient and determinedly superficial. We may not get much impression of the island, but there is a well drilled turn-out of Disneyland animals; and Terry Parsons's pirate ship - black mainmast sprouting from a skull with candlelit eye-sockets - is a fine invention.

Thinly cast in the supporting roles, the performance is carried by two indestructible troupers, Joss Ackland and Bonnie Langford. Mr Ackland (again departing from Barrie) junks the image of the old Etonian Hook in favour of a mock-Spanish grandee, apt to play the bashful eyelash-fluttering beauty whenever the crocodile is on his trail, while turning on the full demon-king for his encounters with Peter. It is synthetic, but so is the show.

As for Miss Langford, you are left gaping as by the performance of a star pupil: flying, dance, song (even *bel canto*, rising to a factory-whistle top note, perfectly in tune), every conventional theatre skill from the splits to the 100-watt grin is at her push-button command. There is not much in the way of character, but you cannot have everything.

Irving Wardle

Concert

Hallé/Thomson Free Trade Hall, Manchester/Radio 3

One complains that orchestras needlessly deprive themselves of contemporary music, but nothing has supplanted David Matthews' attainment of a rather remarkable double exposure this month.

On December 11 his symphonic poem *In the Dark Time* was introduced by Mark Elder and the BBC Symphony Orchestra; then on Thursday it was the turn of his Third Symphony, played by the Hallé under Bryden Thomson in the hall where another third symphony was heard for the first time just ten months ago: that of Peter Maxwell Davies.

It is a mark of the historical switchback we are in that composers should be writing third symphonies again and that they should be talking, as both Matthews and Davies have repeatedly talked, of Sibelius as a key figure in the path of their present works.

But where Davies is still at heart a modernist, seeking a kind of harmony that is new, Matthews in his Third Symphony (though not at all so much in the symphonic poem) deals relaxedly with an understanding of tonality that would not have surprised Shostakovich, Sibelius or Mahler, these being the three composers, roughly in that order, to whom his own work most closely relates.

Paul Griffiths

Opera Filmic panache

La fanciulla del West/The Golden Cockerel Grand, Leeds

Westerns were only 12 years old when Puccini's *Gli di* of the Golden West was born; and it takes very little to send his *Fanciulla* riding off into Sunset Boulevard, as John Manocci proved so splendidly in the pit at Covent Garden recently. Opera North have taken it all the way to the silver screen, and a mighty fine sight out it makes.

David Pountney's production (originally for Netherlands Opera in 1981) introduces the work with silent-movie titles, their near-famous on-side-screens ("Minnie and the stranger have met before") provide an original and gently ironic solution to the supertitle problem at appropriate moments throughout the evening.

First take, the Polka Saloon. Lighting and a manned film camera up above Günther Schneider-Siemssen's conventionally realistic set spotlight one or two characters at a time and guide the eye and response between them. Extras (the miners' individuality is to some extent sacrificed) cross the stage diagonally, an old-style wind machine belches out snow, footage of a galloping posse spurs excitedly with raised fists on stage.

Everything is in muted sepia or, like Puccini and Belasco's melodrama itself, in archetypal black and white. The iron face of Ramon is framed in hard silhouette by black beard and clothes; Johnson makes his first John Wayne-style entry in pale grey; Minnie's black suit is belated by a gleaming white scarf. This Minnie, what is more, is a real live Texan, Mary-Jane Johnson, making her British



Animated fancies: Elizabeth Gale and Andrew Shore in *The Golden Cockerel*

debut, has all the advantages the name implies, and certainly all the debacles for the part. If not yet the presence of a Barbara Stanwyck, nor quite the stamina to hold Puccini's vocal line in the palm of her hand. Her gritty goodness is sharpened against the vicious steel of Malcolm Donnelly's Ramon, whose vocal skill balances the role on just the right side of caricature.

The point at which John Trevelyan, as Johnson, takes upon himself the burden of a Puccinian heroine, is the climax of a remarkably forceful performance. It epitomizes, too, this production's best stroke: its ability to enable you to watch, as it were, from both inside and out, nicely playing off the score's knack of drawing you in so far, then bouncing back off the ear. David Lloyd-Jones controls its rapid cinematic

changes with a panache and an ear for detail which draw the very best from his players.

Gold glints not in the ground but high in the air in another Pountney show: Richard Jones's restaging of his Rimsky-Korsakov *Golden Cockerel*, trapeze and all. Inga-Lise Weigell's high-flying artistry (Braeven Mills provides delicious off-stage sound effects) is just one element in this dizzying visual circus created by Maria Björnson and Sue Blane, as stunning in its spectrum of effects now as it was 10 years ago at Scottish Opera.

By some miracle, the fantasy of Old Russia and Ivan Biblin's print designs co-exist with an entirely English pantomime wonderland. As the Queen of Shemakha (Elizabeth Gale) and King Dirdon (Andrew Shore) journey home in Act III, curtain after curtain descends to reveal

a succession of exquisite animated fancy stills; Russian dolls bob up and down; the Prince brothers banter back to back like Tweedledum and Tweedledee in a production which thrives on ignoring any trace of Pushkin's irony or enigma.

Nuala Willis is, predictably, an inimitable nurse Amelia, her every feature twitching and popping at the service of her voice. Her rich mezzo is a happier vocal colour for Rimsky's music than the very English soprano and bass of Gale and Shore. But Justin Lavender's stratospheric tenor brings magic to the Astrologer, a magic which, with Alexander Rahbari conducting a not over-sophisticated reading of the score, as yet works more potently through the eye than the ear.

Hilary Finch

SPECTRUM

Lloyd's 21st century coffee house

The race is on to complete a new City centre for the world's top insurers. Charles Kneivitt takes the skin off Richard Rogers's audacious design

While the rest of us are gearing down for the Christmas holiday, work goes on at an intensive pace to complete the £163 million new Lloyd's insurance market headquarters in the City of London. About 400 builders are racing towards a handover on New Year's Eve. Fitting out follows with phased occupation from April next year. The Corporation of Lloyd's is hoping for a royal opening in May.

The 1986 building, designed by Richard Rogers, who received this year's Royal Gold Medal for architecture, will be the fourth Lloyd's headquarters in less than 60 years. Rogers was selected in 1978 after six architects on the shortlist had been interviewed. His brief: "To maintain Lloyd's as the centre of world insurance and the unity of the Room" - the traditional market place where brokers spread their clients' risks among underwriting syndicates.

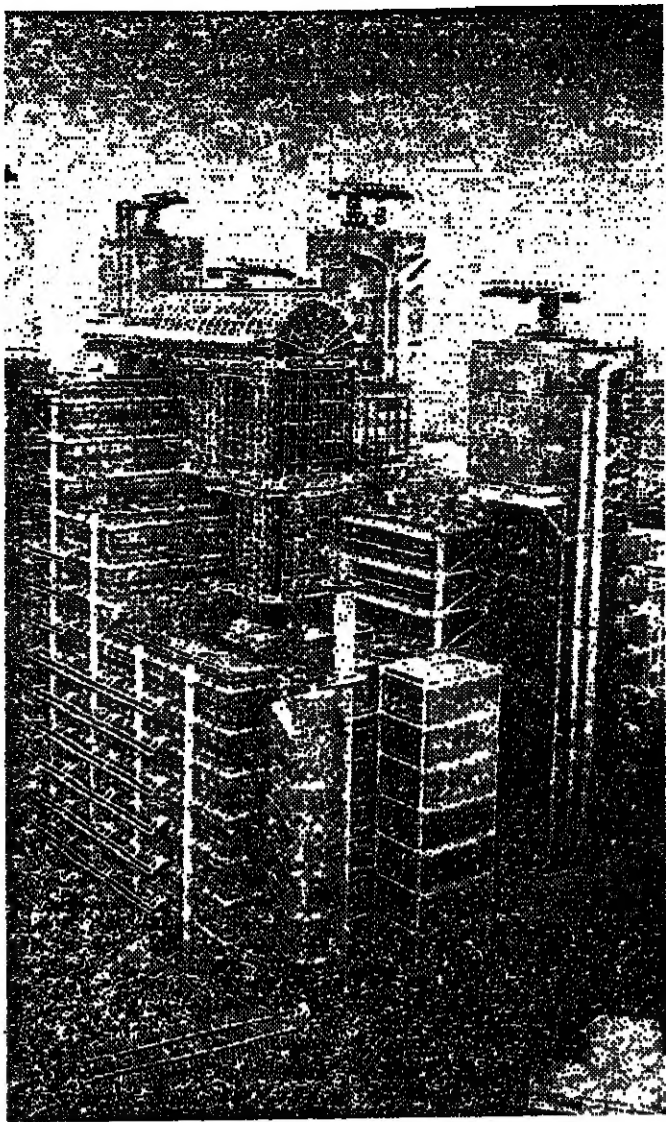
Having outgrown a succession of buildings this century, Lloyd's wanted its new headquarters to have a useful life of at least 50 years and incorporate the latest information and energy-saving technology, which has lifted the price to more than £300 per square foot, making it the most expensive new building in Britain.

Lloyd's has got a Rolls-Royce job but, as one would expect from the co-architect of the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the engine is wrapped around the outside of the coachwork.

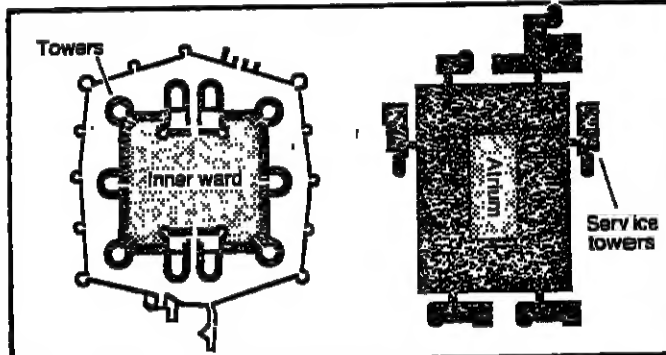
So how does the amazing technicolour dream machine that started Parisians comparing what many see as the extra-terrestrial arrival in the City, a stone's throw in Leadenhall Street from the Bank of England?

Both buildings exemplify the belief in a technological utopia which was popular with architects in the 1960s. They have an optimism about the future which was common to many unbuilt projects by Archigram, the Architectural Association think and design tank, and architect Cedric Price's collaboration with producer Joan Littlewood on the design of a "Fun Palace".

But while Pompidou is a public, cultural supermarket and Lloyd's a private supermarket of commerce and finance, they share a rational design approach which separates "servant" and "servant" functions, in the manner advocated by the American architect Louis



The City of London's latest landmark and Britain's most expensive new building: the £163 million Lloyd's centre by Richard Rogers, co-architect of the Centre Pompidou



Diagrams of the layout of Lloyd's and a castle used by architect Richard Rogers to explain the concept of 'servant' and 'servant' spaces using Louis Kahn's terminology

Kahn. Rogers likens his building to a castle keep.

Six service towers housing ducting, lavatories and staircases with four external glass lifts on three of them, feed each floor, the size of a football pitch. They are topped by huge boxes which look like a stack of giant sea containers and permanent blue cranes on the skyline.

"One may recognize in each part its process of manufacture, erection, maintenance and finally demolition - the why, how and what of the building," says Rogers.

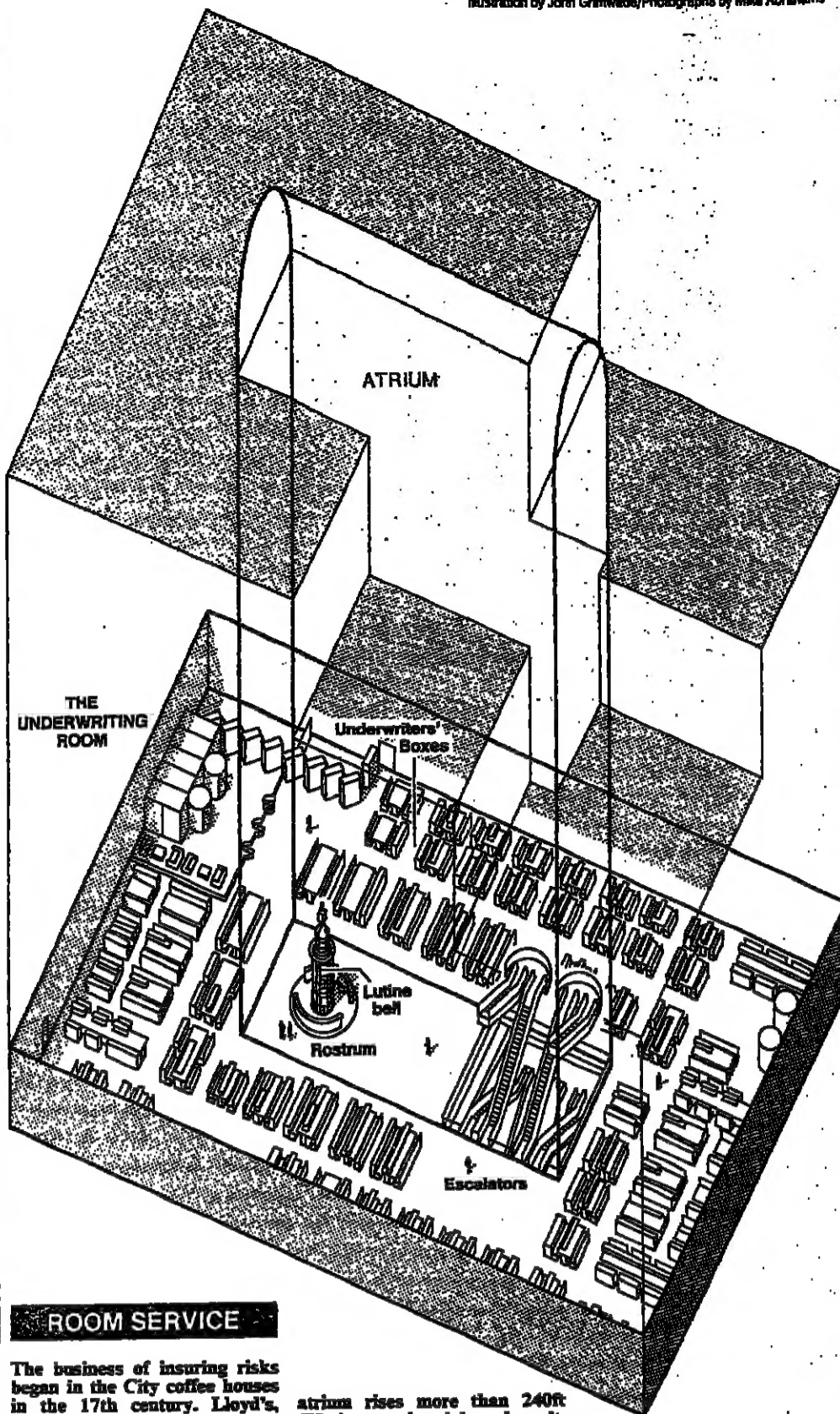
But his use of exposed concrete (prefabricated and in situ), large areas of stainless steel and aluminium, and the triple-glazing (including a layer of frosted glass) tend to neutralize its inherent upishness, in contrast to Pompidou's

primary-coloured patchwork. Lloyd's gleams silver in direct sunlight but takes on shades of pin-stripe suited grey under an overcast sky.

Its interior bears comparison with the great atria of John Portman's Hyatt hotels in America and the banking hall of his former partner, Norman Foster's £500 million Hongkong and Shanghai Bank head-

quarters, completed in Hong Kong last month. The double-height Room filled with underwriters' stalls, known as Boxes, surround the Rostrum and famous Lutine bell beneath an atrium almost 250ft high and crowned with a glazed barrel-vault roof. Twin escalators criss-cross the space.

This is where tradition meets high (or to Rogers, "appropriate") technology head on, while



ROOM SERVICE

The business of insuring risks began in the City coffee houses in the 17th century. Lloyd's, now the centre of world insurance, still follows the traditional pattern through a society of underwriters formed into syndicates who have stalls known as Boxes in the market place - The Room.

The double-height Room is at the heart of the new building. A single open space provides the ideal environment for complex deals. From its centre, the

most of the plant is hidden beneath raised floors and basement levels which resemble the engine room of some large ocean liner. The new building is linked by a bridge, like an umbilical cord, to its 1958 neighbour.

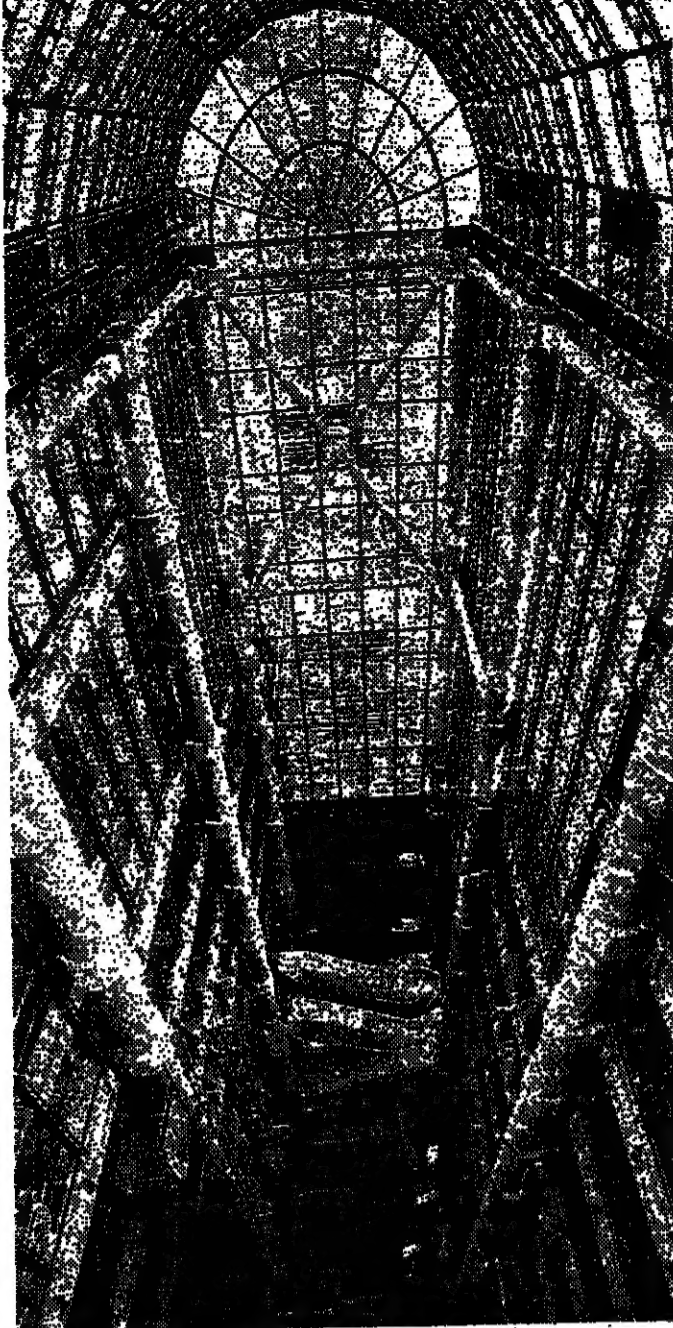
Like its 52-year-old creator, the new headquarters is an audacious, highly-tuned animal but with a social conscience. In this case passers-by will be

invited in to the coffee lounge, wine bar, shops, sports area and meeting rooms at street level. Alas, the opportunity has been missed for putting a public terrace on the south-facing roof.

As one of the leading exponents of the "let it all hang out" school of design, Rogers makes a virtue out of technological necessity. Although feelings about this aesthetic are

mixed, many consider it an aberration of the first principle of design, and that is beauty. Indeed the committee of Lloyd's took flight from the honesty of the architect's approach when it commissioned a French interior designer to furnish the top two floors, instead of the architect, breaking Rogers's heart in the process.

That can be seen as an inevitable consequence of the boldness of Lloyd's decision to appoint Rogers in the first place, for his kit of parts is deliberately designed never to look finished. The City's latest landmark is also its visually most provocative product, not so much a work of universal popular appeal but certainly a veritable machine for making money in.



A glazed barrel vault tops the atrium at the heart of the building 240ft above the floor of The Room, flooding the space with daylight. The escalators are seen below

DOWN THE YEARS

1928: Lloyd's moves from the Royal Exchange to a new building by Sir Edwin Cooper in Leadenhall Street.
1958: Lloyd's moves to its present building, designed by Terence Haysman, in Lime Street.
1978: The Room extended.
1977: Decision to commission a new building which would serve its needs for at least 50 years. Forty architectural firms whittled down to a shortlist of six, including Richard Rogers, Norman Foster and American-Chinese architect I. M. Pei.
1978: May: Richard Rogers appointed after an assessment of the six architects' strategy (not design) for the new building. The client's brief: "To maintain Lloyd's as the centre of world insurance and the unity of the Room".
1978: Outline planning permission. Demolition of listed 1928 building starts.
1981: February: Demolition completed. Construction commences.
1984: July: New building topped out by the Queen Mother.
1985: December 31: Completion of the building contract.
1986: Fitting out. April: Phased occupation. May: Proposed Royal opening.

SPECIFICATION

Cost: £163 million, including fitting out and professional fees.
Gross floor area: 520,000sq ft (48,510sq m).
Lower floors: Approximately 230ft by 131ft (70m by 40m).
Height to top of atrium: 241ft (73m).
ACCOMMODATION:
Ground, first, second and third floors: The Room, linked by a double bank of 14 escalators.
Fourth floor: Lloyd's premises department and visitors' gallery.
Fifth to tenth floors: Lettable suites.
Eleventh and twelfth floors: Chairman, chief executive, senior staff and the Committee Room.
Access to the floors: Four external glazed lifts in each of the three principal satellite towers, at the corner of Leadenhall Street and Lime Street, Lime Street and Leadenhall Place, and in the new alleyway linking Leadenhall Street to Leadenhall Market.
Client: Corporation of Lloyd's.
Architect: Richard Rogers Partnership Ltd.
Structural and Services Engineers: Ove Arup and Partners.
Quantity Surveyors: Monk Dunstone Associates.
Management Contractors: Bovis Construction Ltd.

Channel 4 game plan pays dividends

American football has refined the art of televising sport, reports Ian Waddell

Channel 4 will begin 1986 as it means to continue - with a New Year's Day screening of large American footballers tumbling over or hunching about while crunching mathematics of the game to their English viewers.

While English football is suffering from a variety of ailments, football of the American kind is thriving in Britain. Teams are sprouting up across the country and every Sunday evening four million ardent footballers watch the programme *American Football* on Channel 4; that's 10 times the number who pass through English turnstiles every Saturday afternoon to watch soccer.

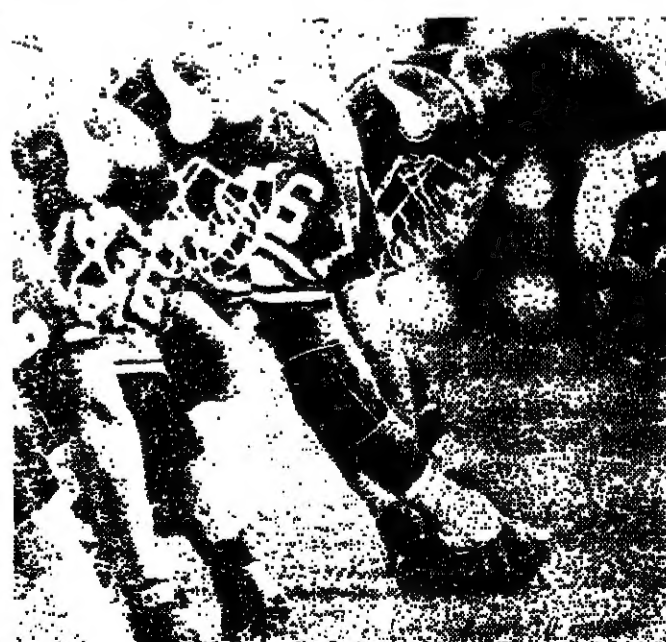
American Football is the creation of Cheerleader Productions who, with a turnover of £2m, exemplify the new breed of small but successful television producers who are challenging more conservative attitudes at the BBC and ITV.

An open challenge to staid sports shows

It was Derek Brandon, Cheerleader's Executive Producer, who headed the consortium which five years ago persuaded Channel 4 to drop its "No Sport" policy, and instead go on to make American football their own.

"When we started", says Brandon, "probably half a dozen people understood it - and five of them were American - but we knew that *American Football* was not just a sports show." Adrian Metcalfe, the commissioning editor for sport at Channel 4, was also aware of the potential appeal of American football, having provided commentary on the Super Bowl (the US equivalent of the Cup Final) for ITV's *World of Sport*.

American Football is an open challenge to the staid, predictable presentation of traditional



Get set: all dressed up and ready to go

sports shows like *Grandstand* and *Sportsnight*.

Cheerleader have, instead, adopted a warm, friendly approach, coupling enthusiastic but casual presenters like the disc jockey Nicky Horne, to exciting visuals and strong music. Mr Horne takes a hand in choosing the music. "I am just one part of a close-knit production team", he says. "I can give input and be more than just an Antecase reader."

This team's approach to the programme is technically difficult and certainly not cheap. *American Football* uses three producers, a computer worth over £120,000 to generate the graphics and at least 37 hours of editing time at the heady price of £5 per minute.

For Basketball, they used eight cameras instead of the traditional two in an attempt to close in on the action and capture the beauty of the game. Unfortunately, static viewing figures plus a lack of finance and viewing that has cut basketball from a weekly, prime-time schedule to just a few games a year, but not before television coverage generated interest in the sport itself. Now nearly every team in the National League First Division is playing to capacity crowds.

For World Championship Tennis they introduced graphics into the coverage (much to the delight of deaf viewers) and Cheerleader employed six producers and a live transatlantic link-up to provide analysis of

each hole by the professionals at the US Masters during American commercial breaks.

Big money and politics led to Cheerleader losing next year's Masters to the BBC, but Brandon is quick to point out that big money and politics do not necessarily make good television and is adamant that this is part of the problem facing soccer, which until next month will have suffered from an almost total lack of TV exposure this season.

Philosophy and style welcomed by viewers

In fact, Channel 4 are not interested in showing soccer. "We'd prefer instead to feature lesser sports which are desperate for television coverage", says Mr Metcalfe. The sponsorship of American football by the US beer company, Budweiser, has pleased both Mr Brandon and Mr Metcalfe. All their £100,000 was placed into Channel 4's budget for programming. This has contributed to Channel 4 featuring over 50 sports this year and has given Cheerleader the chance to do their best possible presentation.

It also means that Mr Brandon has finally gained airtime for America's summer sport, baseball, after three years of frustration due to lack of network finance.

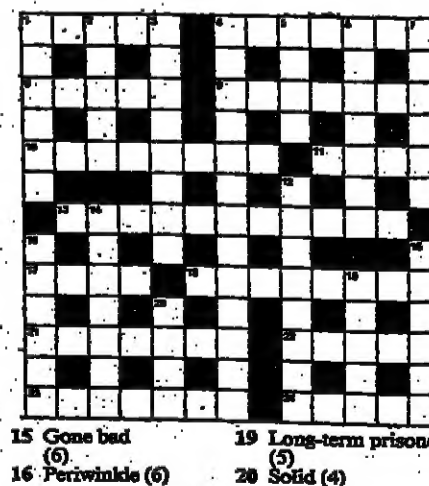
Now Cheerleader are keen to put their philosophy to work outside sport, bringing their own particular style to bear on rock documentaries, game shows and drama.

● Cheerleader have two big American sport days on Channel 4 this January: Wednesday January 1, 11am-12.30pm *American Football*; 12.30-2pm *World Series Baseball*; Sunday January 26, 9.30pm *Live Coverage of Super Bowl XX*.

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CONCISE CROSSWORD (No 832)

ACROSS
1 Imprecise (5)
2 Periodical (7)
3 Tiniest (5)
4 Informed on (7)
10 Single-track line (8)
11 Quote as proof (4)
13 Savage (11)
17 Spheres (4)
18 In masculine way (8)
21 Last parts (7)
22 Incapable (5)
23 Commissionaire (7)
24 Mourning song (5)
DOWN
1 Book (6)
2 Outside (7)
3 Cereal fruit (5)
4 Defence (13)
5 Imminent for (4)
6 Confused (7)
7 Paying guest (6)
12 Azzurri (8)
14 Commerce stoppage (7)
15 Gone bad (6)
16 Periwinkle (6)
19 Long-term prisoner (5)
20 Solid (4)



SOLUTION TO JUMBO CONCISE CROSSWORD
ACROSS: 1 Grasp 4 Last of the Red Hot Mommas 15 Anthrax 16 Cleared 17 Proper serum 18 Typescripts 19 Arrayal 20 Potable 21 Additionally 23 Abnormal amount 27 Insects 28 Testate 29 Lease mastery 37 Smoochy 38 Catastrophe 39 Major domo 40 Pigeonholes 42 Idiots 44 Enigmas 45 Under sentence 49 Shell 49 Nightmare 50 Effeminate 53 Matador 54 Girlishness 56 Rushing 57 Notched 60 Thanks offering 63 Unprofitable 65 Directs 68 Realism 69 Treacle tart 71 Extravagant 72 Inertia 73 Needed 74 Marriage of convenience 75 Doolley
DOWN: 1 Grant 2 Antipodes 3 Parasite 4 Luxuriously 5 Sympathetic 6 Overt 7 Tarzan 8 Endurable 9 Empty bowl 10 Hoodlum 11 Twarp 12 Onset 13 Marabout 14 Samuel Taylor Coleridge 21 A Madman's Night's Dream 22 Lose the edge 24 Lime juice 25 Major 26 Waxed 30 Samisen 31 Shorthand 33 Outrigger 34 Creans 36 Nod 37 Create union 40 Pishchik 41 Greyware 43 Inset 46 Riff 47 Escape 50 Thick 52 Legendaria 53 Munificence 55 Sarcastic 56 Rendition 58 Tide dead 59 Hobnobbed 61 Acrater 62 Farrago 64 Impede 66 Coast 67 Slang 69 Tutti 70 Today



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MONDAY PAGE

Suffering a shock to the system

The tragic case of Jasmine Beckford has raised doubts about the training of social workers. Former student Ann van den Brink felt that such work was her vocation but she tells Sally Brompton why she abandoned her studies and decided not to take up the profession

Ann van den Brink was 31 when she decided to become a social worker. The idea first came to her while she was doing voluntary work in a school for mentally handicapped children. "I used to watch the social workers who came to visit them and they hadn't got an inkling of what to do or how to behave with the children. On one occasion it seemed to me that a male social worker was almost afraid of an eight-year-old girl with cerebral palsy. It made me angry. I thought that the hell has he come for? There didn't seem any point. I felt I could do better than that."

At a time when the professional skills of social workers are increasingly a cause for public concern, Ann van den Brink would certainly appear on the surface to be an ideal candidate for the job which - as is becoming apparent with tragic regularity - can mean the difference between life and death.

I felt I had something to offer... it really meant a lot to me

She has five children (the oldest is 16, the baby 21 months) and an instinctive and practical understanding of caring for the handicapped and underprivileged. She has worked with both physically and mentally handicapped children - voluntary jobs which she loved. She is articulate, capable, down-to-earth, committed.

Brought up in a council house in Essex, she left her Roman Catholic secondary modern school at 15 and went straight out to work as a 24-hour junior clerk. Over the years she has worked as a telephone operator, a shop assistant, a secretary and a clerk to help support her family. "I may not have any academic qualifications but I've got a lot of experience of life and plenty of common sense," she says.

She began the two-year Certificate of Qualification in Social Work course at The Suffolk College in Ipswich in 1981 on a first-year local authority grant of £1,908. "I was really thrilled when they accepted me. I felt I had something to offer and it really meant a lot to me."

The course, however, was not what she had imagined. "It seemed unstructured, sloppy and slapdash... sometimes we'd all sit round in a circle and the tutors would slump in their chairs and ask us 'what shall we do today?' Once we had to act out a sketch from a fairy story. Two of the students had to pretend to be Hansel and Gretel and I was the witch and then I had to be a depressed mother and Hansel and Gretel had to be my two morose children. The other students had to guess who we were."

"One morning, two of us had to wander around town looking at

people's shopping bags and when we got back to college we had to tell the tutor what conclusions we had come to. I felt totally inadequate because I couldn't really make a morning's work out of it. During another session, the tutor asked us 'how many peas are there in a pod? How many crows in a field? How many sweets in a bag? How many brownies in a pack?' It went on for a good three-quarters of an hour and boiled down to 'what sort of number makes a good group if you are going to do group therapy?'

"I began to think there was something wrong with me. I thought 'I'm not inventive or imaginative enough. I'm obviously too down-to-earth.'"

"I wasn't the only one. There was unrest among some of the students - particularly the older ones like myself. But whenever I said anything about it, the others would say 'just hang on until you get your piece of paper and then you can go out there and do what you want'. It really shocked me."

"Also, we were told that our progress was being assessed continually. Nobody wanted to say too much. It case it went down on his assessment."

Part of the course involved spending three months working in the field. "All the social workers I met kept complaining about the size of their case loads and about how much they had to do and I'd think 'they haven't done that much'. Their capacity for work just didn't seem to be that great. I was used to working much harder just bringing up a family and running a home."

"And I felt that a lot of the time they tended to look for things that weren't there and miss completely the things that were. I think you need to be realistic and it seemed to me to be more important, for a child to be happy than to have his sheets changed every week."

On some outings with groups of youngsters considered to be "travellers" she was shocked at the failure of the social workers in charge to attempt to control them. "I think they regarded me as an old-fashioned disciplinarian who hadn't moved with the times. But I believe that there are occasions when a smack on the backside doesn't go amiss."

By the end of her first year, Ann decided she had had enough. "I felt I wasn't getting anything out of it at all, which was very sad. Just seeing the kind of people who became social workers convinced me that I didn't want to become one after all."

Her second husband, Roy Budgen, 38, a doctor of philosophy and a senior lecturer in social policy at the college for eight years, shared her disillusionment and gave up teaching at roughly the same time in order to write. He and Ann had met at the college and began living together several weeks before they left.



Disillusioned: Ann van den Brink with her husband and family

He said: "When I first came to Ipswich in 1974 I was enormously excited and full of enthusiasm for the whole business, but then I began to become aware of the bizarre nature of the training. Some of my colleagues would say things like 'I don't know what we are going to do today. I'll have to show them a film or let them wander about the town and see what they can find out about the world.'"

"I have sat in on colleagues' lectures as an invited guest and watched everyone sit in silence for 20 minutes and then analyse the reasons why nobody had spoken. There was, I felt, a lack of intellectual discipline... in the end I couldn't happily spend my time and draw my salary by being associated with a process which was turning out products ill-fitted to the task of social work."

"The situation was made worse by the fact that, because of the reduction in financial support for students, you could get in almost by just putting pen to paper and I was having to teach

people who should not have got near the place. The failure rate for social workers is so small that as long as you can get in to a college - which is now so easy - unless you do something extremely stupid you're going to go out at the end as a social worker."

I began to think there was something wrong with me

Roy Budgen believes the situation is widespread. "I've travelled all over the country and my observations are that it is a national problem. I think universities have more concern for discipline but even so I'm not certain that social workers get the same rigorous training as they would in medicine or law."

"Part of the trouble is that the majority of the tutors are qualified social workers who were recruited in

the Seventies and came into the business with no teaching qualifications, and in my experience they are frequently people with little understanding of the educational process."

"They consider the lecture to be a very backward form of training. At The Suffolk College everyone had to sit in a circle to emphasise the equality between teacher and student. The idea being that we can all learn from each other - which is all very well but I think the responsibility is still on the teacher to teach and I think that often doesn't happen."

The principal lecturer in the Department of Professional and Management Studies at The Suffolk College refuted the suggestion that the social work course was slapdash and haphazard. "The quality of our work is very thorough and highly professional," said David Heather. "Obviously with such a large number of people passing through it is inevitable that someone is going to be critical of what we do, but the vast majority of our students are satisfied with the quality, style and comprehensiveness of the training and overall we prepare people very thoroughly for their first jobs in social work."

Of the thirty students who enrol each year, he estimates that about five fail to qualify, often for domestic reasons or because "they find they are not suited to social work. The college's two-year course includes social psychology, social policy, welfare rights, social science methodology, general and professional law and social work principles, as well as practical training in the field."

While David Heather was not in charge of the department when Ann van den Brink was at the college, he remembers her husband as "a very able lecturer with an outstandingly good reputation." David Heather stresses that both the curriculum and the syllabus of the £2,000 course is scrutinized by a tutorial board. "You can't be a social worker just based

THE QUALIFICATIONS

Around 3,500 students qualify to become social workers each year. The Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work lays down guidelines as to standards and to what the courses must include. It also insists that half the training is supervised practical work. The basic qualifying courses prepare a social worker to work in any setting. But there is provision for specialists and the council recommends that this takes place after qualification, although a number of courses emphasise a particular aspect such as probation work.

The minimum course of two years can be done either in non-graduate courses, in polytechnics or colleges of further education. Students under 25 must have a minimum of five O-levels and preferably some A-levels. Those over 25 must demonstrate their ability to do an academic course.

There is also a two-year post-graduate course for graduates with any degree and of one year for those with a degree in social sciences or social administration as well as relevant experience. There are also a number of undergraduate courses of four years with an option in social work.

The only qualifications the council insists that non-specialist social work lecturers possess is that they hold a recognised qualification in social work which in practice can mean that they may have only just qualified themselves and never actually held a social work job.

upon common sense," he says. "There is a huge knowledge base and in the end it is the application of this knowledge coupled up with one's own professional approach to social work in general terms that matters."

Despite her decision to leave the course, Ann van den Brink received high marks in her end-of-year tests and was told that if she wanted to finish the course she could come back any time within the next three years to do so - "which I thought was very decent of them. But there was no way I could have slotted into it. I didn't fit into this sisterly militant band of social workers."

As a result of her experiences she now believes that social workers do nothing that could not be done as well by a voluntary agency. "I'm certainly not the type to make a social worker as they are now having seen the training they go through. I don't regret giving up the course because I don't think I would have left it properly equipped to do the job," she said.

I could do the job but I wish the system were different

"I think you need knowledge and guidelines to be a social worker and I didn't get that. I'll never forget what happened during my first week of training when I suggested that what social workers needed was common sense. I was basically shouted down. 'How can you mention common sense when you can't define it? You can't even say exactly what common sense is!'"

"I certainly haven't changed my views. And I still think that I could do the job, only with the system were different."

Almost six months after his resignation, Roy Budgen was invited back to lecture on a part-time basis but declined, despite being out of work. "My disillusionment was such that the temptation of earning so many pounds an hour was not the point," he says. "I just didn't want to be there any more."

He has since written a humorous novel highlighting some of the aspects of social work training about which he is critical. "It's not the college which is at fault so much as the system, which is a wasteful, irrelevant mess."

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A touch of class at the alma mater

My first feeling at being asked to present the prizes at my old school this year was that particular exhilaration which comes when you think that an action of yours will be one in the eye for somebody else.

The somebody else was nobody in particular - a vague amalgam of contemporaries who clanked around wearing prefects' badges while I was being told off for one of my regular misdemeanours in the headmistress's study, teachers who had not seen fit to inscribe my name in gilt letters on the honours board, governors who had never shaken me by the hand and given me a prize.

The first flush of intense happiness was off as soon as I had to get down to preparing a speech. So dismal was my school career that I couldn't believe that anything I delivered there would not be handed back with a red scrawl at the bottom which read "C minus. Please consult me about this poor effort."

Being, by this time, in a state of pure panic, I did the only reasonable thing in the circumstances and had hysterics all over Bernard Levin. This saintly font of all wisdom quietly referred me to the story by P. G. Wodehouse where Gussie Fink-Nottle finds himself at a school-prize giving. Ploughing through the Great Author's collected output trying to find this particular passage took my mind off my own troubles wonderfully.

I then felt calm enough to write a provocative discourse called "Life-Sentences: Expectations in Women's Lives" which, before delivering it to several hundred schoolgirls and their staff and parents, I showed to the wittiest politician I know, in the hope that he might sharpen up some of the jokes for me. Some hope. All he did was circle the typing errors and question my vocabulary. It's as well for him that he is a masterly ad-libber, as it's unlikely that any speech-writer of sensitivity would stay the course.

On the day of the prize giving I went through my old school's main entrance with the same sense of foreboding that had hit me in the guts every day from the age of 11 until I was 17 and ran off to Paris to lead a life of decadency. The same smell of earnest endeavour was in the air. The same wooden honours boards gleamed with the names of everybody but me. The same photograph of one of the founders, looking inappropriately like the male impersonator who sang "All the nice girls love a sailor" on the music halls, still stood beside the window.

Wearing my best Jean Muir leather jacket but feeling as though I was back in gravity-stained serge, I made my way to the headmistress's study - and was greeted by a tall, elegant blonde with Meryl Streep cheekbones. In my day, headmistresses came from Central Casting, complete with hairy tweed two-pieces and thread veins. It was quite a surprise to find one who would not have looked out of place on the books of a model agency.

Checking out the rest of the staff and pupils, I found



PENNY PERRICK

prettiness breaking out all over the place. The prizewinners wore a stylish array of Betty Jackson-inspired droopy jerseys, huge earrings, wildly-patterned tights. As a teacher read out the citations "Angelina Fitzgibbon for the Primrose Torrington prize in psycholinguistics," I felt she should have added that "Angelina is wearing fine wool trousers and matching coat in raincloud grey. Her eyelashes have been painted bright blue for added interest."

But inside these pretty heads were some perfectly beautiful brains. The prize giving programme was thickly sprinkled with asterisks and bold type that signified distinctions in examinations and most of last year's sixth form leavers seemed to have got exhibitions to Oxbridge to read Jurisprudence or Mathematics. How unlike the star pupils of my own school days, who all had fat knees and acne.

The gist of my speech was that women must now look upon a career as a job for life or, as I put it, not very charmingly, "All of you here are statistically more likely to have a full-time job for almost the whole of your adult lives as you are to remain married to the same husband." They listened politely, laughed in the right places and then sloped off, glamorously and self-confidently into the night. How comforting to know that there is no need to lock up our daughters; they are obviously perfectly able to cope with the wide and wicked world.

A book called *Only the Best* - a celebration of gift giving in America - notes that the offering of presents involves "acts of love, humour and revenge."

No knowledge could have come in handier at this time of year. To prove that I know what's socially chic, I am off to buy some ribbed leggings for a woman with saddle-bag thighs, a box of Belgian chocolates for a girl who is trying to stick to the Cambridge diet and a bottle of after-shave for a man with a beard. For two pins I would also buy one of those jigsaws that don't have a picture on the lid but throughout the whole of my life I have never met anybody who has been nasty enough to me to deserve that.

*By Stuart E. Jacobson. Price £35, published by Abrams, New York.

TOMORROW

Life after *Dynasty*: Ali MacGraw talks to Suzy Menkes about her tastes in fashion and how she dresses to please herself

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Snakes alive? A tail of mystery and suspense

If you think you can guess someone's lifestyle from the things they plump down the supermarket check-out, remember appearances can be deceptive. Spend 51 weeks coaxing the family to eat wholemeal bread, low-fat spread and sugarless marmalade and wouldn't your friends catch you out on the fifty-second week when an unsuspecting yearning for thin sliced, plastic white bread, salty butter and colouring-laden strawberry jam has overcome your poor basket-filling hands?

I was admiring one friend's well-balanced and economically astute purchases the other day as we clashed trolleys: low-fat spread, granary oats, fresh fruit and vegetables, a frozen pack of whitebait.

"So, you're not eating much red meat, either, these days?" I quizzed her. "Oh, the whitebait?" she replied. "That's for the snake."

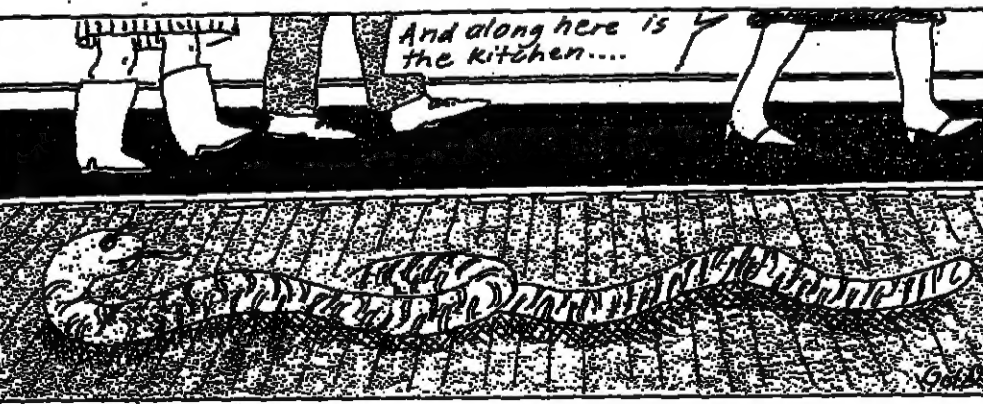
That frozen block of small fish had one of its members prised away every ten days, defrosted and fed to Mad Max, her son's two-foot-long North American garter snake, purchased from a pet shop for £8.

Kept in an empty glass aquarium with a variety of natural village and an overhead lamp for warmth, Mad Max was now celebrating his first year in her son's capable care.

As we passed the pickles and cooking oils, I told my friend our family's sad tale. We, too, had owned a garter snake. About three years ago my 13-year-old had come home from school with a seven-inch gold baby snake in a jar to be paid for with a cheque for £4, sale or return - the trading terms of a snake-breeding classmate.

This snake's name was Henry. He would live in a perspex box lid. He only needed the warmth of an overhead 40-watt bulb, the shade of a large branch of privet and a saucerful of fresh water every day. "He only eats once a week," was my son's final sales pitch. "A worm from the garden if you can find one."

As a child I had been used to a variety of pets around the house and garden. A monkey, two goats, Old English fighting game, trilling canaries and lovebirds, so a tiny Luxur-shimmering snake which cocked its



head intelligently at you when you spoke was neither here nor there.

Next day disaster struck. The door of Henry's special room was found ajar. The cat was slinking away with the nearest thing to a smirk on her tabby face. The perspex box lay on the floor. Forty watts beamed down on to an empty table. Over in the corner by the brass fireplace fender were the sad remains; one Luxur tail.

That bedtime there were tears and recriminations. "But your mother loves animals", my

husband said, reasoning the two boys out of their conspiracy theory. A short funeral service was held for the tail in the pouring rain.

After a day of inadequacy, depression and guilt, I privately wondered if I could cancel the cheque.

One week later, while vacuuming the carpet in the same room, I bashed the Hoover against the unpainted brass fender. Something gold shimmered and then vanished under the fender. I bashed the fender

again. It was Henry - tailless but otherwise fine.

As I got to this bit of the story my friend and I were approaching the dairy section for the second time. She was looking rather pale. "Oh, the bit where it had broken off had started to heal beautifully," I reassured her. "Like a lizard he must have broken free in the danger."

"So you've still got him?" she asked, placing a 93p natural yoghurt on top of her bran biscuits. I had to admit we lost him again after that miracle escape.

My younger son forgot to replace his lid after showing him off to a friend. By that time Henry's home was in the laundry room near the open back door. It was a sunny day. Can a North American garter snake survive three summers and winters in our great outdoors without a 40-watt bulb?

We were now approaching the check-out. My friend said anxiously: "Yes, he does need heat." "He's not outside at all, I confided. Every time I spring clean under the washing machine and near the freezer I dread seeing that familiar wriggle. Has he been living under the floorboards undisturbed at last by silly women, careless schoolboys and marauding cats? When we try to sell the house with vacant possession will he rear up through a pipe cavity, well-fed on woodworm, death watch beetle and whatever else we're claiming not to possess; three feet long and gleaming? One slippery tenant?"

Vivien Tomlinson

LAURA ASHLEY

S A L E

STARTS 27TH DECEMBER

THE TIMES DIARY

For Pitt's sake

Kenneth Baker, the Environment Secretary, is to be asked to sanction a remarkable item of GLC (i.e. public) expenditure: up to £50,000 on indemnifying Peter Pitt, chairman of its arts committee, against costs incurred in suing *Private Eye*. The GLC's policy committee decided on this step in private session last week after legal advice that a snippet about him could be defamatory, and that the expenditure might be justified on the grounds that the alleged libel is "sufficiently grave to threaten the future exercise by (his) committee of its proper functions, and thus, in turn, of the GLC itself". No matter that the GLC will be abolished long before the case could be heard; the mere issuing of a writ would help restore public confidence in the committee for the remainder of its existence, says counsel, and it might prompt *Private Eye* to publish a prompt retraction and apology.

Devolution

Britain may be quitting Unesco, but moves are afoot for Wales to stay. Dafydd Elis Thomas, MP and president of Plaid Cymru, has written to Unesco's general secretary, Amadou Malou, asking if it would maintain links with Wales alone. He concedes that this may be difficult because Wales, having only limited international recognition, is not strong on state institutions. He suggests, however, that a link might be forged through the Welsh Centre of International Affairs based at the Temple of Peace in Cardiff.

Rod unspared

Rod Hackney, Prince Charles's rebuked architectural adviser, at least has a sense of humour. He has just paid £100 for a Mac cartoon at Shetler's "Monstrous Caricatures" charity exhibition at the Building Centre. It shows a dapper beneath a railway bridge exclaiming: "Then after I was released from the Tower I tried to get my architecture business started again but it was no good..."

Sight unseen

Tory rebel David Howell, sacked as Transport Secretary in 1983, has a book coming out in the spring critical of government policies. It is called *Blind Victory* - "victory" because centralism has been defeated, "blind" because the government has failed to adapt its industrial and employment policies to changing circumstances. Howell should keep his doors firmly locked. When it was revealed last year that former Cabinet colleague Francis Pym was writing a similar book, his office was mysteriously ransacked.

BARRY FANTONI



"Suspect on roof: beard, red suit and carrying a large sack"

Flashback

How times change. I have just been shipped anonymously a 1979 *Militant* Bulletin recounting a legal battle being waged against *Militant* by Labour right-winger John Goding over the paper's version of his conduct on the national executive. Triumphant *Militant* claims that not only Dennis Skinner and Joan Maynard support its account - but also Neil Kinnock, Patricia Hewitt, Kinnock's aide, told me this weekend that it sounded too unlikely even to bother asking him about it. "I'd guess it's about as accurate as the rest of that paper," she said.

Party rifts

Villagers of Parwich, in Derbyshire, are rather sad about the split in the Workers Revolutionary Party. For the past decade, like feudal landlords, the WRP has invited them to its training school in the village, White Meadows Farm, to eat, drink, and fraternise with Vanessa and Corin Redgrave at a Christmas party. Unfortunately the Redgraves have stayed loyal to the disgraced Gerry Healy. Michael Banda's faction has retained control of the farm - and cancelled this year's party.

Gold-plated

The GLC, it emerges, has no fewer than 11 vehicles boasting number plates lettered GLC. These plates would doubtless be of great sentimental value to the likes of Ken Livingstone post-abolition. To acquire one, however, he would have to buy the vehicle, and therein lies a problem. Only two are attached to cars, and one of those is a Daimler limousine. Tractors account for six and a Ransome mower, a dump truck and a "specialized surface defectograph vehicle" the other three.

PHS

Wanted: a ministry of science

by John Kingman

Every civilized country spends about half of one per cent of its gross national product - and some significantly more - on basic scientific research funded from the public purse. The sum is not insignificant for an activity which few people can begin to understand.

This involves a number of political problems. Should a government include a "science" policy which relates the support of science to its perception of the national interest? If so, how can politicians inform themselves sufficiently to make rational decisions on subjects in which they rarely have professional expertise?

In 1982 Mrs Thatcher's government agreed with a select committee of the House of Lords that "there should not be a separate executive department responsible for all aspects of science and technology".

Thus we have a decentralized system which reflects the departmentalized structure of British government, under which everything is in the national interest only if it fits within the departmental priorities of one or other secretary of state. The overall research effort is the sum of largely independent departmental activities, and it is not considered proper to compare these with one another, still less to trade between them. This system has a number of serious weaknesses.

First, it encourages research in departments with large budgets at the expense of those whose budgets are smaller. The number of really good scientists is limited. If one department can afford to buy up all the talent, the research of other departments (and of research in the

private sector) will suffer.

Another weakness is that it inhibits communication and the free flow of ideas and criticism. Government laboratories can easily become cut off from the main flow of science just when new problems arise which need fresh ideas and techniques.

An urgent new problem will not wait for the necessary experts to be produced. The nation needs to be able to call on those who have been working for other, non-specific reasons on those areas which will suddenly become of importance.

Outside the areas of agriculture, medicine and the environment which have their own research councils, the locus of basic research is in the universities, supported by the Science and Engineering Research Council (SERC).

Most of the money for this research comes from the block grant of the University Grants Committee. Both the UGC and the various research councils receive their money from the Department of Education and Science. The secretary of state has no control over the applied research sponsored by other ministers, who in turn can influence only indirectly the level of support for basic research. This disjunction is perhaps the strongest argument for the government to formulate and implement a policy for its own support of science.

How do others manage this sort of problem? In most European countries basic research is concentrated more in research institutes which are

easier to co-ordinate than universities.

In the US the job of co-ordination is taken up by the science adviser to the president, who enjoys the support of an extensive organization within the White House complex. In Britain, there has for 40 years been a scientist near the prime minister with some responsibility for the overall pattern of public science. Unfortunately, the position of the chief scientist has steadily declined, from cabinet minister through permanent secretary to deputy secretary, and for one terrible period to under-secretary.

In contemporary times two ministers in particular have come to be regarded as ministers of science and technology in embryo. One is the parliamentary under-secretary in the DES responsible for, among other matters, higher education and the research councils. The main weakness of his position is that he has only minimal departmental support, since the science branch of the DES is only a tiny part of that department, and the branches dealing with higher education concentrate on teaching issues and take little cognisance of the research function of universities, and still less of polytechnics.

Meanwhile, at the Department of Trade and Industry, a minister of state is tackling similar problems. He controls very little of the government's direct research activity, but he can and does sponsor research in industry and through SERC in universities and polytech-

nics. The quadrilateral, with DTI supporting industry, SERC the higher education sector and policy co-ordination between the DTI and the SERC, is a powerful mechanism whose potential has only recently been realized. But it has grown up despite, not because of, the departmental structure.

An alliance between the two ministers and the chief scientist in the Cabinet Office could provide the mechanism for the development of a policy for public science, but none of the three has authority over government research. Only the Treasury takes an overall view, a fact whose implications do not need to be spelt out.

If the issues are important enough to require ministerial intervention, the disarray becomes very public. To whom is the minister of research and technology from Paris or Bonn to talk when he comes to London? The answer is that he probably doesn't bother to come.

Britain urgently needs a proper ministry of science and technology. I am not arguing for such a ministry so that science would have a voice in the Cabinet, or because I believe it would generate more money for science. Both objectives could be achieved without setting up a ministry. The real need is for coherence in policy and, in particular, for the sensible allocation of limited public resources.

The author, formerly chairman of the Science and Engineering Research Council, is vice-chancellor of Bristol University. This article is extracted from a speech given in London recently.

Bernard Levin: the way we live now

Enter the lists for this noble minority



Lord Finchley tried to mend the electric light himself - it struck him dead, and serve him right. It is the duty of the wealthy man to give employment to the artisan.

I discovered that there is a professional body, the Society of Indexers, and that it gives an official qualification, attained by a rigorous expert assessment of an indexer's work, which alone entitles him or her to be included on the Society's register. I also, however, discovered the lady (I was introduced to her by my publishers) who has indexed all my subsequent books, and who is, as I learned, not only the Greatest Indexer in the World but the Very Nicest Too. (Authors and others who want an index made should get in touch with the Society's Registrar, who is Mrs Elizabeth Wallis; her address is 25 Leyburne Park, Kew Gardens, Surrey, Telephone 940 4771. She will advise on a book which an Indexer would be suitable for the work contemplated - some special-

ize in particular subjects - and give other essential information. But those who would like the services of My Very Own Indexer should write to me; if they seem sufficiently respectable I shall give them her name and address.)

But there is, difficult though you may find it to believe, a particular point to this column. It is the truly shocking level of payment that this very remarkable and responsible work commands. Publishers sometimes pay indexers the same hourly rate as proof-readers. I salute the craft of proof-reading (in which I do have some skill of my own), but the comparison is invalid, for indexers need far more hard-won knowledge and understanding than a proof-reader, and it is not too much to say that they not only enhance and make more useful the books they index, but that their art at its best can be a genuinely creative part of a published book.

Yet the minimum rate proposed by the Society of Indexers (it is not enforced, and hardly could be) is at

present no more than £5.25 an hour, and publishers have been known to complain to indexers that they are "pricing themselves out of the market". Apart from the lamentably low level of reward for so high a level of professionalism, the hourly rate is an absurdity in itself, for it takes no cognisance of the widely different varieties of index, some of which are far more complex and demanding than others.

A few publishers absorb the cost of an index, and one who does so has expressed himself uneasy at the majority who charge the author for it. Instead, "I do not," he said, "charge the author for having an artist design a book jacket, nor for the skilled work of my in-house editor". My own publisher is among the majority; I do not begrudge a penny of what my beloved indexer charges, but then her fee is only a tiny fraction of what my books earn me, and I know that there are writers to whom the indexer's charges represent a substantial proportion of a small advance that is unlikely to be increased by subsequent royalties. No doubt that would be true also in the case of very small or specialized publishers, but it is high time general publishers took the view that the work of the indexer is as essential as that of the jacket-designer or for that matter the printer and the supplier of paper, and carried the cost.

This is by no means so esoteric a subject as you may imagine. Hardly a week goes by without a book reviewer complaining at the low quality (or absence) of the index to a book he is dealing with; the Society's quarterly magazine has a regular feature consisting of excerpts from reviews, and the number of adverse comments is considerably greater than that of indexes praised, and quite right too, for I have read many books of outstanding quality, interest and value which have been seriously and irretrievably damaged by an inadequate index; one that comes to mind is the *Diaries of Cosima Wagner*, which came in two volumes, though my public explosion of rage at the useless index to the first volume had no effect on the quality of the second, which was just as bad. Even my own publishers have recently sinned inexcusably, and I know of very few who never do so.

This, then, is a plea for an admirable profession, equipped with real skills, to be accorded both the respect and the reward that it deserves. I have no interest to declare; though I was honoured to be invited to join the Society of Indexers I am not available to do other people's indexes, and a lousy fist I would make of them if I were. But in their obviously lesser and unspectacular way, indexers suffer from misprision and injustice, just as homosexuals, smokers and Freemasons do, and I felt that, having repeatedly done my duty by the last three, I could do no less than draw a drum for the first.

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Anne Sofer

Three wise memos - or are they?

The Christmas break will give Mrs Thatcher a chance to reflect on one of her more intractable problems - the teachers' pay dispute. Meanwhile the Christmas post, more chaotic than usual, has delivered to me the following three memos, all clearly intended for 10 Downing Street.

To: the Prime Minister
From: Research Department, Conservative Central Office

You asked for an assessment of poll findings on the teachers' dispute. Gallup indicates that parents are now more concerned about the strike than about any other issue in education - it has gone from eighth place to first in the last six months. At the same time the number of voters who think the nation is not giving enough attention to education doubled from one third to two thirds between 1959 and 1984 and now stands at a record 75 per cent.

Since 1984 the percentage of parents dissatisfied with their children's education, and who think it is worse than their own education, has increased sharply. Both now stand at 41 per cent. On the figures for public esteem for teachers, the slow decline which was noticeable between 1959 and 1984 has continued, but there seems to be no special factor related to the present pay dispute.

As I read these figures, there is rising concern about education in the country, and it is more likely to hurt the government than the teaching profession - though there will be damage to both.

To: the Prime Minister
From: Osbert Oldschool, Heartlands Comprehensive School, Surrey

May I, as a firm supporter of the Government's financial strategy (and I must be about the only headmaster of a maintained school in the country who dares make that boast) offer what insight I can into the effects of the current dispute, and a possible way out?

Market forces are now working clearly to deplete quality in the teaching profession. Fortunately in my own prosperous suburb, a combination of judicious appointments and the general conservative (large and small "c") climate has enabled me to keep out the sort of trouble-makers who are causing major disruption in some schools, so the academic programme has continued smoothly this term. But many of my best teachers are leaving. Four maths/science teachers have left this term to take up jobs outside teaching. The private sector is snapping them up - often for almost double the salary. An extremely able young physical education teacher has left to join the fire service (for an extra £2,000); one of my ablest history teachers, back on Scale 2, has got a job in education television - and so on.

moreover... Miles Kingston

Tempting fate on the footplate

Regular readers will know that real life is not allowed to impinge too readily on what goes on in this column. Unfortunately, real life has a habit of biting you in the ankle now and again, and last Wednesday real life bit back with a vengeance. For the first time since I began this column, I was unable to write about what might happen if you were stuck in a 125 Inter-City train, absolutely motionless for half an hour. What I had forgotten was that morning I was due to take the 7.45 Euston to Glasgow train, getting off at Lancaster.

And so it came to pass that as I unfolded *The Times* to read this happy fantasy piece about standing still in the middle of the country, the train came to a halt, and for half an hour we stood still, or occasionally limped forward. After an hour we had still not reached Watford. I had read my piece many times by then, and it did not seem at all funny.

The north, it is sometimes said, begins at Watford, but what is more important is that breakfast also begins at Watford. If you are sitting in the restaurant car, and have ordered your grapefruit segments and mixed grill as you leave Euston, you will never under any circumstances receive them before Watford, in case people getting on at Watford also want grapefruit and sausages. A stomach that waits an hour for breakfast is not a happy stomach.

On the other hand, people who look like missing their connections do start a general conversation in a way that British Rail passengers normally do not. The girl opposite me had to get to Chester via Crewe for a top-level charity meeting at 11.15 and she told me her life story as well as background material. In return, I told her that I had to get to Carnforth by 1 pm to catch the Flying Scotsman to the middle of the Yorkshire moors.

Improbable though it sounded, it was quite true. For most of this year I have been working off and on for BBC2 on six films about steam railways. One of them is about the Flying Scotsman. The locomotive known as the Flying Scotsman has been at Steamtown, Carnforth, undergoing major transplant operations so that it can sail forth at Christmas time to pull various special trains.

Last Wednesday was the day it was due to undergo its final test on a stretch of main line. (I can make all this sound more amusing when I have a new grapefruit segment inside me.) The BBC had got permission to film on board the engine with me as the token ignoramus, or presenter, as it is technically known.

All these teachers had the makings of leaders in the profession. A crisis of leadership is already with us. Who wants to be a head these days? Many of my colleagues are suffering nervous breakdowns. It will be even worse in five years time.

I am convinced that we need an immediate substantial rise in teachers' salaries. If need be, it will have to be paid for by a cut in numbers. Over the last five years, salaries have improved overall and salaries have fallen. It was the wrong way round.

Of course the unions will scream, and the education lobby will wince. Let them. What we need is quality not quantity.

To: the Prime Minister
From: Frederick Farright, Centre for Policy Studies

I believe we are now at breakthrough point on the whole subject of state education. If only the Government holds firm, we could suddenly find ourselves making a quantum leap towards the free market system which is the only way this country can shake itself free of socialist mediocrity. The state system is currently in total disarray: the unions divided, the teachers beginning to show themselves in their true Marxist colours, parents in despair, those jackasses from the local authorities wringing their hands and thrashing around doing nothing.

So now is our chance. I suggest in the first instance a series of pincer movements: a big increase in the assisted places scheme, pressing ahead with a "direct grant" pilot scheme. And meanwhile, behind the scenes, we should be preparing for an experimental voucher project.

Some of the loonier local authorities are likely to be in a state of collapse by this time next year, what with a continued strike - official or unofficial - confrontation over rate-capping and so on. As soon as the stage is reached where the Government has to step in, what better way of regenerating support among the electorate than by offering the parents education vouchers? Their children won't have been getting much education to speak of for the past two years in any case. The teachers will have been behaving sufficiently outrageously to justify locking them out. So we could start with a clean slate.

I know that strenuous will warn you about the effects of the voucher system. Have better presentation of our case would be a help. Have we had professional advice on this?

The very last thing we want at the moment is an inquiry. The teachers would be bound to win, and we would be back to all that dreary bureaucratic consensus. Now is our chance of breaking that, so hold firm!

The author is SDP member of the GLC/ILEA for St Pancras North.

Great Wall, but still the tycoons queue

Every weekday afternoon the waiting room of Peking's main telegraph office is packed with people waiting to make a long-distance telephone call. Despite the addition of 10,000 extra lines with the recent opening of a new exchange, only a small minority of Peking residents are on the telephone. Nationally, the figure is a mere 0.4 per cent.

In its five-year plan for 1986-91, the Chinese government gives high priority to improving the telephone network, along with energy and transport, but it is not surprising therefore that senior officials of Britain's top electronics firms - STC, GEC, Cable and Wireless, Plessey, Ferranti and Racal - accompanied Lord Young on his recent trade mission to China.

The Sichuan provincial government is already well advanced in its plan to install PABX systems and digital exchanges in rural areas in a joint manufacturing venture with a Western company. Richard Reynolds of GEC spent every waking minute of the mission's trip to Chengdu trying to persuade provincial officials it should be his company. Beyond that is a vastly more ambitious system for the Yangtze delta, costing £500 million, that could provide work for nearly all the companies represented on the

Young mission - cable, optical fibres, digital exchanges, telephone sets and so on.

This is a particularly auspicious time for Sino-British trade. Despite criticism by hardliners, Peking's "open door" policy towards foreign industry is still on course and China seems set to maintain an annual growth rate of at least 7 per cent. At present Britain accounts for only 2 per cent of China's imports, but this should increase substantially after the agreement on the future of Hong Kong and Mrs Thatcher's visit to Peking a year ago. The Queen's visit to China in October 1986 will underpin the improvement in relations.

There have been some conspicuous successes already. British Aerospace believes its contract to build 10 BA 146s at a cost of about £100 million will be followed by orders for up to 40 more. The decision by Sir Eric Sharp of Cable and Wireless to buy the Hong Kong Telephone Company last year in the midst of the colony's political travails could well prove an entrée to the mainland. Last Thursday C & W consolidated its Hong Kong purchase with the inauguration of a new 100,000-line microwave circuit which will pave the way for direct dialling between Hong Kong and the

whole of neighbouring Guangdong province.

All Western companies, however, still face an uphill struggle in penetrating the Chinese market. As a step towards industrial self-sufficiency, China is looking principally for joint ventures that eventually will be export earners. That may be a relatively simple matter where the project is a hotel and therefore a natural foreign currency earner; in manufacturing, where Chinese hopes of exports often seem unrealistic to their Western partners, it can make negotiations much more difficult.

One result of the relaxation on imports has been a big influx of TV sets and cars - dramatized by the Hainan scandal in which officials were found to have abused the island's special "open" status by importing 70,000 vehicles for resale for up to 40 more. The decision by Sir Eric Sharp of Cable and Wireless to buy the Hong Kong Telephone Company last year in the midst of the colony's political travails could well prove an entrée to the mainland. Last Thursday C & W consolidated its Hong Kong purchase with the inauguration of a new 100,000-line microwave circuit which will pave the way for direct dialling between Hong Kong and the

Ferranti hopes to build China's first advanced technology integrated circuit factory. Peking had suddenly objected to the proportion of profit which would be reinvested in Britain under the locally negotiated terms.

The most jaundiced Western view of trade with China comes from a background paper prepared earlier this year for US officials by Catherine Houghton of the US embassy in Peking. It said that among the many disincentives to overseas investment in China were: "Severe foreign currency restrictions, overvaluation of the Chinese partner's contribution, inflated labour costs, poor labour discipline... unpredictable customs treatment, dependable supplies of local materials, grossly inadequate energy, transportation and communications, a cumbersome bureaucracy, an irrational pricing structure, uncertain access to a poorly defined domestic market, a marginal return on investment and difficult expatriate living conditions."

None of this imposing list of obstacles, however, has deterred Western businessmen. The trade missions will continue to seek audience with Peking's new mandarins.

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SUBTLETY IS NOT ENOUGH

All governments manipulate the rate support grant. The intellectual Mr Crosland, the puritanical Mr Shore, the wily Mr Heseltine and now the clever Mr Baker: as Secretaries of State for the Environment they have all done it. Rates reform, if it ever comes to pass, will not lessen the temptation. As long as there is a central mechanism to supplement the resources available from local taxation, ministers will massage the figures for the sake of principle and patronage. To criticize them for it is worse than naive, for it betrays a hankering after the substitution of administrative formulae for the judgement of accountable politicians.

This year Mr Baker can be faulted perhaps for his subtlety. To be accused simultaneously of pushing their rates up and by Mr David Blunkett, the conscience of the cities, of trying to keep urban rates down is no mean feat. At one and the same time, there is a relative shift of money towards the inner urban areas (both in the city) and yet through the rate-capping mechanism Mr Baker can properly claim to be keeping a tight lid on Labour city council spending. It will take an extraordinarily clear-headed ratepayer to know which party to reward in the May elections next year, in, say, a rate-capped inner London borough.

The trail that ought to have led, however, from abolition of the Greater London Council through to substantial ratepayer savings has been covered over, grants have been shifted about. The Government's intention is for city ratepayers to feel better off as a result of abolition and perhaps they will. But the promised savings in manpower and cost and bureaucracy are yet to be glimpsed: it does the Government little credit to renege so openly on the calcu-

lations of savings made on its behalf two years ago by Mr King. To pay for a shift in grants to London and the cities, counties with a strong rate base - for example the suburban counties of the South East - have lost. The Government says blandly this is an inevitable consequence of the process of resource equalization, a nice phrase which also covers the scheme by which commercial ratepayers in the City of London and Westminster are charged an extra impost for the benefit of the inhabitants of Hillingdon and Barking. Another phrase, describing the same process, is socialist redistribution.

Mr Baker, as all the world avows, is an accomplished salesman of such packages as last week's RSG distribution. But something else is needed. What is missing is a sense that the stream of policies for the local administration of England and Wales that has issued so fast and so furiously from the Environment Department over the past six years is not just leading towards a dangerous centralism. In the New Year the Government promises its thoughts about the future of local government finance. Here discussion of the technical merits of poll tax will not do. The issue of the autonomy of local decision-making must be grasped.

The materials for such a debate are already about. Mr Baker says he is proud to have ended the system - put in place in 1982 by Mr Heseltine - by which every council received a centrally decreed expenditure target. This system represented the logical extension of the cash limit regime, an attempt to control the disaggregated financial decisions of four hundred local authorities. That it did not work is besides the point; more important it took away local

decision making potential and put central government in line to take responsibility for the most parochial events. It was statist of a sort no Conservative government should have had time for, except in financial crisis.

Under the new rules applicable in 1986-87, councils have the freedom to increase their expenditure, but will run up against a series of carefully graded schedules under which spending above thresholds will result in heavy loss of government grant. It is a regime of sticks and carrots and must be welcome for its restoration of responsibility to the local level. But what the Government must surely do now is extend the principle further. It must present its thoughts on alternatives to the rates not as a surreptitious exercise in expenditure control but a genuine restoration of accountability to localities.

There is no use pretending this does not involve sacrifice, most notably of the doctrine of Treasury control of the aggregates of local public expenditure. It will involve, necessarily, the abandonment of rate capping, for ultimately (if local accountability is to work) there can be no second-guessing of ratepayer preference. For too long the Government's policies for local government have taken the form of emergency reactions, ill thought out responses to a perceived failure of control. Now that reform of local taxation has been made the centrepiece of local government policy for the remainder of the Government's term, the time has come for a reassertion of principle. And that principle must be a belief that local taxpayers - within a fair system of taxation which matches financial and political responsibility - are the best judges of local expenditure.

CHRIST BEHIND THE CURTAIN

In Britain, as in most West European countries, Christmas is virtually the only day in the year when the churches are full, although we continue in theory to identify ourselves as a Christian society and state. In several of the communist states of Eastern Europe, by contrast, you may find full churches all the year round. Marxist theory predicts that religion will fade away under communism. But in real life it is Marxist theory which has faded away under communism, while religion is a growing force behind the Iron Curtain today.

In the West, the reverse sometimes appears to be the case: Marxist theory flourishes under capitalism, while religion has tended rather to fade away. The paradox is well captured by the Solidarity leader Lech Walesa. "If you look at what we have in our shops," he has remarked, "communism has done very little for us. But if you look at what we have in our souls, then I answer that communism has done a great deal for us."

Of course Poland is exceptional in this respect. We must be very careful not to oversimplify the position of the Churches and religious believers in communist lands. Superficially attractive generalizations such as the proposition that "only a persecuted Church is a strong Church" are as risky, and on closer examination as inadequate, as the old saw that "only suffering produces great art". Many of the official Church hierarchies have in fact been crippled or corrupted by pressures from the communist state. This is true to a greater or lesser degree of the Roman Catholic Churches in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Lithuania, although in all these countries there is a significant movement "from below" of Christians who refuse the compromises made by state-venned prelates and constitute vibrant unofficial churches with their own remarkable religious samizdat.

It is true in a rather different way of the main hierarchy of the Orthodox Church in the Soviet

Union, which by and large continues its Tsarist traditions of identification with the Greater Russian empire, although here too there are courageous priests - the name of Father Gleb Yakunin must stand for many - who bear true witness under conditions of extreme persecution. And of course it is most devastatingly true of Albania, where the state's ruthless atheism has quite simply made worship a physical impossibility for the great majority of its citizens.

Conversely where a Church has preserved a high degree of institutional strength and independence, it has not done so simply and solely by outright defiance. The Protestant Church in East Germany, for example, has defined its own position as that of a "Church in socialism" and striven very hard to find areas of common ground with the state, although never hesitating to speak out against it on issues of conscience where no compromise is permissible. And the unique position of the Catholic Church in Poland today is due partly to the readiness of its great post-war Primate, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, to make institutional compromises which were much criticized at the time they were made.

Moreover, it is legitimate to enquire how many of the young people who now fill the churches in Poland and East Germany do so for other than strictly religious reasons. In recent years, some have certainly gathered there because in a communist state it is the only place where they can freely discuss the social and political problems which most concern them. And recalling Lech Walesa's remark, we may just sometimes wonder whether the churches would be quite so full if the shops were not quite so empty.

Yet when all these necessary doubts, distinctions and qualifications have been entered, the overwhelming impression remains that these Churches have a clearer conception of what they are here to do, and of where they are going, than most of our

Churches in Britain and Western Europe. And if this is true of the Churches, how much more so it is true of individual Christians. Arguably the greatest reaffirmation in our time of the fundamental common values of our European civilization has come through Christians from the other half of Europe - be they Protestants in East Germany, the Pope from Poland, or a Russian Orthodox priest like Father Yakunin. They it is who have most powerfully restated the values of freedom, peace and love which we often all too casually profess.

The Christian's inner freedom allows them to declare, from a prison cell: *stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage*. But they also proclaim the absolute necessity of those external freedoms without which most people cannot live in truth and dignity. The concept of peace they rescue from its increasingly superficial usage in the West - where it seems more and more taken to mean simply the absence of nuclear war - and give it back its full, deeper meaning. When they talk of a "struggle for peace" they know what it means, on their skins and those of their families and friends, to meet violence with non-violence, evil with good, hatred with love. And in our time, it is Christians like Father Jerzy Popieluszko who have again given us an example of that final sacrifice which we must, ultimately, each and all be prepared to make, if we truly believe in the values of a Christian civilization. "Greater love hath no man than this..."

So if, once a year in church, between the Christmas shopping and the Christmas guzzling, we are asked to remember Christians in the other half of Europe who do not enjoy our material welfare, our peace and our freedoms, we would be ill-advised to think of them in the spirit of a rich family remembering its poor cousins. They are probably richer than most of us in true fellowship and faith. From them we can learn.

Christmas and the poor

From Mr Ian Wallace
Sir, I recently received a letter reporting that a small group of Sudanese and expatriate Christians had raised over £500 Sudanese (five times the average monthly wage) at a communion service to send to the drought-stricken areas in central Sudan. At current prices their gift will buy five sacks of grain.

At the same time I read that the quantity of grain now stored in Europe and North America is approximately 358 million tonnes, to say nothing of the meat, oil and dairy surpluses.

As Christmas approaches and we sing happily of "peace on earth and good will to all men" should we not bear in mind that the issues of peace and of justice are usually intertwined?

It now appears that the system of world trade which brought us wealth

and security through the 1970s did so at the expense of the poorer valleys of the world and, to use Paul Valéry's words (Screened from the suffering children, December 13)... the West was keeping its head above water by standing on drowning black men."

If we are truly concerned about world peace it is not time that we sought to reverse the current trends which give preference to the export of armaments while mountains of food accumulate in our storehouses? Refusal to recognize that we have a responsibility to the world's poor will give our Christmas celebrations something of the air of Nero's revelry.

Yours faithfully,
IAN WALLACE,
95 Swindon Road,
North Wroughton,
Swindon,
Wiltshire.
December 17.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Government action on schizophrenics

From the Joint Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Security

Sir, Your leader of yesterday (December 19) dealt with a subject which is important to me. No one who has spent a day with the National Schizophrenia Fellowship can for a moment forget schizophrenia and the unhappiness it brings to the sufferers, their families and those who care for them.

You ask for a "clear admission from the Government that care in the community is not a cheap option, but one that will cost more." Health authorities plans provide for rising expenditure over the next 10 years. These plans show that authorities have headed the Government's urging to shift expenditure towards priority services. At the same time spending by local authorities (which have a much smaller share in mental illness expenditure) continues to rise - by 42 per cent over the last five years.

I welcome your firm declaration that "the policy of making care in the community available is the right one". But you appear to have some misconceptions about DHSS policy. The Government has not urged health authorities to discharge long-stay patients. Indeed, statistics confirm that the number discharged in 1983 was considerably lower than the number discharged in 1973. As our policy paper says:

"Patients who would be better off outside hospital should have a planned discharge to suitable care even if no closure is foreseen; patients who are better off in inpatient care should continue to receive such care, by a transfer if necessary, even if a closure is planned."

The fall over the last 30 years in inpatient care has now reached a point where some hospitals are uneconomic to run. We have, therefore, urged health authorities to plan comprehensive alternative services, including the transfer of long-stay patients where appropriate. As your article indicates, the closures of a minority of hospitals are crucial to putting right the present anomaly under which 90 per cent of the patients are in the community while 90 per cent of the resources are in the hospitals.

Second, the number of community psychiatric nurses providing a lifeline to the chronic patient at home is growing particularly fast. Some 18 months ago, as part of our wider "helping the community to care" initiative, we financed work in three different health districts specifically aimed at the chronic schizophrenic person. These were designed to improve communication within a district - to secure a properly co-ordinated service. A key point was the involvement of the carers, as trusted allies of the professionals.

The Government is very conscious that a policy of community care must rest on acceptance by the public. On the whole the situation is not as discouraging as some may think. But it is hardly helpful either to the carers, or to sufferers from

schizophrenia who are seeking to lead a normal life in the community, to place such public emphasis on the comparatively rare cases involving violence or a threat of violence. The many studies show that most sufferers are glad to be at home; that most carers prefer the sufferer to be there than elsewhere.

Your article has only confirmed my acute concern that the heroic efforts of carers should be recognised. The DHSS is doing all it can to see that professionals give them more help and move in effectively if and when the carers can no longer cope. I welcome the moves which the Royal College of Psychiatrists has already made in this direction and shall be glad to see that the carers is given the priority it deserves.

Yours faithfully,
ALEXANDER FLEMING HOUSE,
Elephant and Castle, SE1.
December 20.

From Dr Paul Williams and Dr Greg Wilkinson

Sir, We welcome the fact that you have drawn attention to the problem of patients with schizophrenia and their care in the community. In particular, we agree with your leader's observation (December 19) that the policy of community care is the right one, but that it is "the execution which is proving weak".

However, we wish to draw attention to a lacuna in your otherwise comprehensive editorial. In the words of the House of Commons Social Services Committee on community care (HC 131, II, III, paragraph 188) "community care (for the adult mentally ill) depends to a large extent on the continuing capacity of GPs to provide primary medical care to mentally disabled people."

The role of the general practitioner services in the care of patients with schizophrenia and other chronic mental illnesses, and that of their families, is generally neglected. There is evidence that the vast majority of such patients are registered with GPs and it is insufficiently recognized that these doctors play a crucial role in dealing with crises and relapses, as well as in routine medical care.

In this context the recommendations of the Social Services Committee are worth emphasizing: greater understanding and encouragement of the GP's role in the management of mental illness on the part of hospital psychiatrists would be welcome (paragraph 23.86) - the training of GPs in psychiatry (should be reviewed) - with a view to ensuring that GPs are better equipped to provide general medical services to mentally disabled people.

Yours faithfully,
PAUL WILLIAMS,
General Practice Research Unit,
Institute of Psychiatry,
de Crespigny Park, SE5,
December 12.

Awards and rewards

From Mr John Cook

Sir, Last Sunday night I had the dubious pleasure of watching on television the Society of West End Theatre Managers' annual awards programme. I wish, as an inveterate theatregoer, to make three points:

First, these award-giving ceremonies make such embarrassing television programmes that they have a completely adverse effect on those who are unable to go frequently to the theatre and judge the shows and performances for themselves.

Secondly, if the ceremonies are considered to be beneficial and the object is to promote excellence in the theatre as a whole, should not the awards be spread more widely to include those matters, other than the shows themselves, that also affect the pleasure of a night out in the theatre? I refer to the cleanliness and decor of the theatres, the service in the bars during the interval, how quickly the box office staff answer their telephones, are the programmes good value for money etc.

Thirdly, I would also question whether it is really necessary to employ TV newscasters to introduce the awards at what is essentially a theatrical occasion when there are thousands of unemployed performers who could do it equally as well, if not better.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN COOK,
Deaton & Warner's Agency Ltd.,
47 Greencoat Place,
Westminster SW1,
December 10.

University admissions

From the Senior Tutor of Emmanuel College, Cambridge

Sir, As an admissions tutor, I was puzzled by your report (December 11) that "Universities are to give special consideration to A-level pupils whose education has been affected by the 10-month teachers' pay dispute". How, I wonder, does the Secretary of the Standing Conference on University Entrance propose that this aim might be achieved, given that a very high proportion of the approximately 200,000 candidates will have had their schooling disrupted by the dispute?

Admissions tutors do, of course, make special allowances to candidates in exceptional circumstances and always endeavour to assess sympathetically those candidates who have prepared for and taken their A levels while coping with particular difficulties such as illness or accident, a family bereavement or a parental separation.

Such exceptional circumstances cannot, either in theory or in practice, be generalised to cover the disruption to their education (and narrowly academic and broadly extra-curricular) now being suffered by many, probably by most, and possibly by all sixth-formers. Admissions tutors in the universities

Planning in Oxford

From Mr F. V. Savage

Sir, The "Threat to the historic environment of Oxford" (letters, December 10, 14, 17, 18) comes not from "indiscriminate development" but, as I have been at pains to point out to the Oxfordshire and city planning authorities and the Department of the Environment, as a consequence of the green belt collar which stifles the city.

This collar of constraint obliges the planners to deliberately release amenity land near to the town and university for housing and other development, which by reason of the planning control system of today, architecturally inferior and offends all that is old and fine.

Had there been more concern for the needs of the growing population which would, and should have been satisfied in the towns and villages of the countryside around Oxford, the city itself would still be as pleasant as it was in my school days.

I am sorry to say that the price we have had to pay for the green belt was too high, but then why single out Oxford? Other cities are being similarly spoilt by green belts and has not the time come when we should examine the extent to which we deplete our urban areas with infill on remaining green sites?

Yours faithfully,
F. VICTOR SAVAGE,
Savage & Partners,
The Gatehouse,
1 Blües Street,
Chesham,
Buckinghamshire.

Case for giving students loans

From Councillor John Hart

Sir, Today's leader (December 18) on student paupers comes well. The Government evidently believes it makes more sense to disburse money in mandatory grants than to recycle it as loans. Oh well.

Besides the mandatory grants, distributed free on behalf of HM Government by local education authorities and only recouped 90 per cent from national coffers, many of those same local education authorities provide discretionary grants to residents for courses not covered for mandatory grant.

This is entirely their own money. The amount available is dwindling. Annually my own authority (Barnet, a generous provider) has to disburse some 200 applicants, most of them with a job in mind for which they want to get the qualification. If we could use our own money as loans we might eventually help more such people.

Galantly, local education authorities may not make loans for such a purpose; nor is there any intention so to empower them, I have been told by the Department of Education and Science. Why? I am, Sir, very truly yours,
J. R. HART,
London Borough of Barnet,
Member of Council,
Town Hall,
Hendon NW4.

Westland's future

From Mr G. Knight and others

Sir, As people whose livelihood depends on the success of Westland Helicopters, we can only view with alarm the controversy surrounding the rival rescue bids for the company.

No doubt ministerial disagreements make excellent copy, but offer little comfort to a workforce and a community which has spent the last year or more living under the shadows of firstly, a possible takeover bid, then various "rescue bids", and now 742 redundancies.

If collective responsibility is a term used to describe Cabinet decisions (and in this instance the term hardly seems to apply) then "collective inertia" is the only way to describe the actions of the Government and the Ministry of Defence in recent times.

A great deal is now being said about the importance of a European solution and the defence interests of this country being compromised if the Sikorsky rescue package goes ahead. Surely there has been ample time to provide the assistance Westland so badly needs without waiting until the last moment to cobble together a rescue plan involving our conjectural European partners.

Westland is a private company, and as such should be allowed to attempt to solve its own problems. We feel that the Sikorsky solution offers more hope for the future and is highly preferable to having no helicopter industry at all.

Yours faithfully,
G. KNIGHT,
D. SMITH,
D. CLEMENTS,
D. WILLIAMS,
L. THOMPSON,
30 St Michael's Avenue,
Yeovil, Somerset.
December 19.

Interest on policies

From Mr Percy Richer

Sir, On November 18 the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry announced in the House of Commons that interest will in future be paid on policies after the death of the policyholder until the date of the payment of a reform for which I have recently strenuously campaigned.

That is the good news. The bad news is that interest will not start to run until two months after the death of the policyholder, with the result that the industry will continue to withhold about £8 million per annum from beneficiaries.

Timeo Danaos...

Yours etc.,
PERCY RICHER,
Linton Britton & Lumb, Solicitors,
9 Leigham Hall Parade,
Streatham High Road, SW16,
December 5.

Second best

From Mr J. Allan Denholm

Sir, Mr Michael Elwyn's using a credit card (December 14) to divide hard-boiled eggs indicates a singular misuse of the card.

Had he used the card as it was intended - to purchase some cutlery - he could have avoided smudging the signature on the card.

Yours faithfully,
J. ALLAN DENHOLM,
Greencroft,
19 Colquhoun Drive,
Bearsden,
Glasgow,
December 16.

From Mrs Pamela Jenkins

Sir, Every potter knows that the credit card is the most suitable tool for scraping excess clay from the base of a pot before removing it from the wheel. My husband keeps urging me to use our Portfolio card, as it has been of little value, but is much too flimsy.

Yours sincerely,
PAMELA JENKINS,
10 Riselaw Crescent,
Edinburgh,
December 14.

From the Director and Chief Executive of Access

Sir, Your correspondence columns have recently suggested one or two interesting ways of deriving extra benefits from the use of a "flexible friend" credit card. Whilst I could not encourage its use as a *pâté spreader*, the proposal put forward (December 9) for its secondary use

ON THIS DAY

DECEMBER 23 1986

A scorp for The Times. Lord Randolph Churchill (1849-95) was Chancellor of the Exchequer in Lord Salisbury's ministry. His proposals to effect Budget economies by cuts in the Services Estimates were not accepted by the Cabinet. On December 22 Lord Randolph called at the paper's offices and saw the Editor, Buxton, giving him permission to publish the news of his resignation.

THE CHANCELLOR'S DECISION

We have this morning to make the startling announcement that the CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER has placed his resignation in the hands of LORD SALISBURY. The reason assigned for a step grave at all times, and deriving additional gravity from the peculiarities of the existing political situation, is that LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL, as the Minister responsible for the national finances, cannot concern in the Estimates put forth by the War Office and the Admiralty. LORD SALISBURY, at a point of fact, been compelled to choose between supporting the Ministers responsible for the defence of the Empire and giving his sanction to the more economical views of national needs advocated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Had LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL, proclaimed, with the authority derived from official knowledge and an official position, that both departments must submit to thorough overhauling and reconstruction upon a business footing, we should have been nothing but praise for his courage and nothing but the best wishes for his success. It is, however, a very different matter when he simply declares that less money must be spent without taking steps to insure the wise spending what he still has at so important a moment. It will be the effect upon our national position and security of withdrawing the expenditure for which the Departments ask.

But in order to justify his resignation upon financial grounds at such a moment as the present, LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL would have to do a great deal more than prove that his financial ideas are sound. Reforms, however important, and economies however legitimate, must always be considered, like everything else in politics, in the light of broad, general principles, for example, the principle of the continuity of the State. The country, we believe, will ask whether LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL ought not at least to have acquired a greater experience and more complete command of the financial situation in all its complex aspects before taking such a momentous step away from so important a post. It will be generally felt that, while economy is most desirable, we are not in such desperate straits as to justify or require us to incur the gravest political dangers in order to effect an instant saving. Another twelve months of excessive expenditure, for example, would not have ruined this nation, nor will the largest economy that any Chancellor of the Exchequer can effect rescue us for the losses that might accrue from a sudden weakening of the Executive...

We believe there is no doubt of a cessation of hostilities, and conditions viable to all the world that LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL has not found himself in entire accord with the Cabinet upon some other questions besides the provision to be made for the defensive services. There have been obvious differences of tone in the treatment of some of the subjects by himself and by his colleagues. Such differences always exist among the members of a Government, unless it happens to consist of dummies who merely echo the order of their chief... LORD RANDOLPH has done well to understand that it may be hoped that he will not wholly forget the lessons of office, but it must be admitted that the position he has made for himself is not one that tends to the development of a sense of responsibility. He is not easily classed at this moment, nor can we quite discover all the securities we could desire that he will not lapse into the company of associates whom his friends would gladly see him avoid.

as an organ donor card is worthy of further consideration, although there would be many problems in such a service being administered by any organization other than an official body such as the National Health Service. But to those of your readers exercising their ingenuity, may I advise them that following extensive field trials by 8.3 million users this Christmas, we feel confident that we have now discovered its ultimate role - it's for shopping! Yours faithfully,
J. M. BLACKBURN,
Director and Chief Executive,
Access.
The Joint Credit Card Company Limited,
Chartwell House,
365 Chartwell Square,
Southend-on-Sea,
Essex.
December 12.

From Mr J. Doyle
Sir, Thinking on recent letters on the ingenuity of readers when faced with absence of knives etc, I fell to wondering if their names had been forwarded to Mrs Thatcher.

Surely it is this thin inventiveness that she most desperately seeks in order to get the country to the forefront again. Yours sincerely,
J. DOYLE,
92 Paultney Road,
Mudford,
Christchurch,
Dorset.
December 15.

Horns of a dilemma

From Sir David Serpell

Sir, Your correspondent (December 12) seeking advice on a vegetarian welcome for a prodigal daughter might find "The Song of Solomon" a useful guide.

Figs, apples, grapes and pomegranates, flavoured with saffron, cinnamon and other spices, should go down well.

A heap of wheat, served with honeycomb, would provide musical-like roughage, whose passage would be eased by draughts of milk and wine (from figs).

The table decorations should include roses and lilies of the valley, with perhaps a few thorns.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID SERPELL,
25 Crosspates,
Dorchester,
Devon.
December 13.

COURT AND SOCIAL

SOCIAL NEWS

The Duke of Kent, Vice-Chairman of the British Overseas Trade Board, will visit the Export Intelligence Service Headquarters at Eastcote, London on January 28.

The Duke of Gloucester, Patron of the London Playing Fields Society, will attend a reception at New Zealand House, London, on February 11.

The Duchess of Gloucester, Patron of the Cot Death Research Society, the Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths, will attend a meeting at 4 Grosvenor Place, London, on February 11.

The Duke of Gloucester, Patron of the Heritage of London Trust and President of St Bartholomew's Hospital, London, will attend a reception to mark the completion of the rehabilitation of St Bartholomew's Hospital's historic buildings at the hospital on February 13.

The Duke of Gloucester will open the new central library at Ilford, Essex, on February 23.

Princess Alexandra will present the awards of the Worldwide Bed and Breakfast Association at Kensington and Chelsea Town Hall on January 23.

Princess Alexandra will present the Sports Personality of the Year awards of BFBS Radio and SSVS Television at the Royal Army Medical College, Millbank, on February 23.

The Duchess of Kent will present the Daily Star gold star awards at the luncheon on the Park on February 19.

The Duke of Kent, president of the Royal Television Society, will present the journalism awards at the Dorchester hotel on February 20.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr P. E. Burgon and Miss K. M. G. Woznica. The engagement is announced between Paul, younger son of Mrs E. Burgon and the late Mr J. Burgon, of Cambridge, and Krystyna, daughter of Mr and Mrs K. Woznica, of Corby, Wiltshire.

Mr M. R. A. Cotter and Miss R. A. Smith. The engagement is announced between Mark Robert Alexander, son of Mr and Mrs G. J. Cotter, of Chichester, West Sussex, and Beverly Anne, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs A. F. Smith, of Horsham, West Sussex.

Mr C. J. Goodall and Miss C. J. Stacey. The engagement is announced between Christopher, son of Mr and Mrs P. J. Goodall, of East Molesey, and Carolyn, daughter of Mr and Mrs A. L. Stacey, of Worcester.

Mr K. A. Huxson and Miss E. M. Jordan. The engagement is announced between Karim, eldest son of Mr and Mrs A. Huxson, of Basingstoke, Hampshire, and Claire, daughter of Mr and Mrs Victor Jordan, of Chesham, Surrey.

Mr M. A. Kenney and Miss E. V. Smith. The engagement is announced between Michael, eldest son of Mr and Mrs J. V. Kenney, of Arundel, Sussex, and Valerie, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Frank Smith, of Hamstead, Bedfordshire, formerly of Kilmacomb.

Mr P. S. C. Lloyd Owen and Miss R. F. Husted. The engagement is announced between Piers, second son of Major-General D. L. Lloyd Owen, CB, DSO, OBE, MC, and Mrs Lloyd Owen, of Swanton, Norfolk, and Pamela, only daughter of Mr and Mrs H. W. Husted, of Nantucket, Massachusetts, United States, and the late Mrs Husted.

Mr T. J. A. Wilson and Miss A. R. Cree. The engagement is announced between James, elder son of Mr and Mrs J. Wilson, of Salisbury, Wiltshire, and Anna, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs G. Cree, of Overmole, Dorset.

Science report

Anorexia is blamed for some infertility

By Thomson Prentice, Science Correspondent

The use of ultrasound scanning in women suffering from infertility may disclose that an underlying cause of their condition is anorexia nervosa.

A study at a London hospital has shown that the ovaries of underweight patients with anorexia nervosa are considerably smaller than those of normal women.

The ovaries return to normal size when weight is restored, but it has been found that multiple small ovarian cysts develop during weight gain.

This finding has not been previously reported in anorexia nervosa, and the authors of the study suggest that in underweight, infertile patients with cystic ovaries, an encouragement to gain weight may be more effective than hormonal treatment.

The study, carried out by St Thomas's Hospital in conjunction with the Institute of Psychiatry in London, lends support to the suggestion that

Aids fear centres on the chalice

Clifford Longley

Some four million or more people are likely to receive Holy Communion at Christmas. Many of them may wait their turn for the communion chalice with misgivings, uncertain as to the degree of risk they may be running of contracting an infectious disease, particularly Aids (acquired immune deficiency syndrome).

According to medical authorities consulted both by the churches and now by *The Times*, the risk is slight but definite precautions ought to be taken nevertheless. Not all the authorities are agreed on the priority to be given to such precautions, some of which may have value only as reassurances. They are:

- The wiping of the rim inside and out of the chalice after each communicant. This is the essential precaution, which some authorities regard as sufficient in itself. The white cloth used, known as a purificator, should be freshly laundered. Some authorities advise the administrator of the chalice to use a different part of the purificator each time.
- The rotation of the chalice after each communicant. This extends the period during which germs would be exposed to the sterilizing effect of wine and of the noble metal used in chalices, and allows traces of saliva to dry, which is also a sterilizing process. This must be combined with the use of the purificator.
- The reception of Holy Communion under one kind only. Both the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches regard the reception of communion in the form of both bread and wine as better symbolism, being closer to the Last Supper, but both hold doctrinally that either form is sufficient by itself to be regarded as full and effective communion.
- In some Roman Catholic churches, where communion in both kinds is being introduced, the clergy have been advised by their bishop to tell the congregation that as a matter of charity they should consider receiving in one form only if they are suffering from an infectious medical condition. This is a self-discipline many Anglicans already observe.
- The reception of both forms of communion by "instinct". The communicant takes the host or wafer in his hand, and before eating it dips it carefully into the chalice. This appears to be a legitimate option in all churches, but not always encouraged as it weakens the symbolism. A communicant intending to do this would be advised to consult the clergyman beforehand, at least to warn him in advance. It is used in the Orthodox churches.
- The use of wine with normal alcohol content. In some "low" Anglican churches as well as in some Free churches so-called "non-alcoholic wine" is used, which has no sterilizing effect.
- The use of vessels of noble metal (silver or gold). Minute quantities of the metal dissolve as ions into the wine, with a sterilizing effect. Pewter or earthenware communion vessels, which have become fashionable, have no such effect.
- Distribution of communion in small separate vessels, one per communicant. This is not recommended in the Roman Catholic or Anglican churches, as it weakens the symbolism, but is common in the Free churches where it compensates for the use of non-sterilizing alcohol-free wine.

What is rejected by the authorities of all churches is the "superstitious" belief that the sacredness of communion would by itself protect communicants from any possible harm. It is said to be a surprisingly common belief, according to some clergy.

The possibility of cross-infection through the communion cup is a recurring topic, made more urgent by the discovery that the Aids virus can be traced in the saliva of the infected person.

Marriages

Lieutenant Commander L. McAlister, RN, and Mrs C. Wallace. The marriage has taken place at Portsmouth of Lieutenant Commander Lawrence McAlister Jay and Mrs Caroline Wallace.

Mr R. V. T. Mitchell-Fox and Miss J. J. Boyd. The marriage took place on Saturday, December 14, at Walcott Chapel, Bath, between Mr Roderick Mitchell-Fox and Miss Jennifer Boyd.

Mr B. C. A. Whitlow and Miss J. F. Reeves. The marriage took place on Saturday, December 14, at Freshwater, of Mr Bernard Whitlow, only son of Mr and Mrs S. A. Whitlow, of Moulton, London, and Miss Jennifer Reeves, only daughter of Mr and Mrs T. Reeves, of Freshwater, Isle of Wight.

Award for Ove Arup

Ove Arup & Partners have received an Institution of Structural Engineers special award for their contribution to the \$500 million Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank headquarters in Hong Kong (Our Architecture Correspondent writes).

The bank was designed by the British architect, Mr Norman Foster, with Ove Arup & Partners as consulting engineers. The contractor was a joint venture between George Wimpey International and the local firm of John Lok & Partners.

Work commenced on the building in 1982. The first phase was handed over in July this year and the formal opening will be on April 7 next year.

Church news

Prinus elected. The Right Rev. Edward Luscombe has been elected Prinus of the Scottish Episcopal Church. He succeeds the Most Rev. Alastair Haggart, who has retired as prinus and will remain office as Bishop of Edinburgh on December 31.

Church in Wales. The Rev. J. J. Jones, Rector of Tredegar, and the Rev. J. J. Jones, Vicar of St David's, Llanelli, are to be consecrated as Bishops of Wales.

Latest appointments

Latest appointments include: Sir Malcolm Wilson to be a member of the University Grants Committee for four years from January 1. Mr Stuart Johnson, director of education for Leeds City Council, has been reappointed for a further term until 1988.

The Rev. Dr John McCaughey to be Governor of the state of Victoria, Australia, from February 18, in succession to Sir Brian Murray.



Prince Rainier congratulating his daughter, Princess Caroline, patron of Les Ballets de Monte Carlo, which held its inaugural gala in the principality at the weekend. A "Te Deum" was performed in memory of Princess Grace, who had worked for the revival of ballet in Monaco.

Latest wills

£778,649 estate left to Dr Barnardo's. Mr Leslie Charles Stewart, of Bourneville, left estate valued at £778,649 net all to Dr Barnardo's. Mr Frank Clifford, of Stourbridge, left £437,823 net. After personal bequests totalling £6,450 and a life interest in a further £5,000 he left two thirds of the residue to the RNLI and one third to the Wild Fowl Trust.

Mr Donald Fenton Cunniffe, Great Missenden, left £5,630,123 net. Marion Clark, of St John's Wood, London, left £1,121,682 net.

Major-General Anthony Patrick Willey-Wiley, of Market Drayton, Shropshire, Major-General Commando Forces, Plymouth, 70, left estate valued at £118,522 net.

Mr Sidney Geoffrey Young, of Hampstead, London, left estate valued at £1,479,954 net.

Mr Maurice Petherick, of St Austell, Cornwall, left estate valued at £106,360 net.

Other estates include (net, before tax paid): Campbell, Mr Bryan, of Acton, Middlesex, £356,224; Jerome, Mr Leonard, of Harrogate, president of S. Jerome and Sons (Holdings), Shipley, £481,733; Wood, Mr John Herbert, of Tunbridge Wells, £290,888; Pickett, Mr Herbert Edwin, of Torquay, Devon, £329,383; Risch, Mr George Herman, of Redbridge, London, £374,434; Ridley, Mr Alice Maude, of Gainsborough, Lincolnshire, £695,660; Wolfenden, Mr Alan James, Gwosworth, Cheshire, £669,276 net; Denham, Mrs Rose Elizabeth Alice, of Winchester Hill, London, £311,105; Russell, Mr Henry, of East Bridgford, Nottinghamshire, company director, £403,362.

Archaeology

Shang dynasty capital found

By Norman Hammond, Archaeology Correspondent

Chinese archaeologists have discovered a lost capital of the Shang Dynasty, dating back more than 3,500 years. The walled enclosure includes palaces and tombs, and numerous bronze and jade artefacts have been found.

The city, identified as ancient Xibo, the Shang capital in the seventeenth or sixteenth century BC, was found at Shixiangzi, 19 miles east of Luoyang, itself a capital of China in later dynasties. The site lies between the Luoshui river and the Yellow river in a fertile plain.

The city wall enclosed an area at least 1,700 by 1,200 metres the long east and west walls had three gates each, while the shorter north wall had only a single gate. The south wall has not yet been found. The walls were built of rammed earth, raised in successive layers between boards in the technique called *hang-tu*. Part of the city wall of another Shang capital, at Zhengzhou lower down the Yellow river, was excavated some years ago and found to be of similar construction.

Broad roads inside the city lead from the gates to the interior, where three smaller enclosures existed in the southern part. The central enclosure, contained a number of timber halls and palaces, of which only the post holes remain, and was probably the seat of the rulers of Xibo.

Excavations in the enclosure have yielded weaponry in the form of bronze and jade arrowheads (the shafts and bows being of perishable wood), glazed pottery and oracle bones. The latter were scapulae of oxen, or turtle shells, on which a query to the oracle was inscribed; they are the earliest known Chinese texts and of great importance for the history of the Chinese script.

The central gates in the east and west walls of the main city have been excavated. That on the west is very narrow, only 2.4 metres wide through the 17 metres thick city wall. The east gate was built over large underground drainage channels lined with stones.

Burials were found inside both gates, with extended skeletons accompanied by bronze wine vessels, cooking pots, axes, knives and jade pendants.

A palace was excavated in the inner enclosure. It covered an area of 55 metres by 32 metres, with the main building facing south on to four flights of descending steps. The flanking

Appointments in the Forces

Royal Navy. CAPTAIN A. G. T. Groom, MVO, DSO, DFC, has been promoted to Rear Admiral. CAPTAIN R. G. T. Groom, MVO, DSO, DFC, has been promoted to Rear Admiral. CAPTAIN R. G. T. Groom, MVO, DSO, DFC, has been promoted to Rear Admiral.

Progress of legislation

On 16th December the House of Commons passed the Criminal Justice Bill, which will provide for the abolition of the death penalty in England and Wales. The bill also provides for the abolition of the death penalty in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Birthdays today

Lord Bradford, 63; Mrs C. Bicknell, 66; Mr Archibald Black, 72; Lord Blake, 69; Vice-Admiral Sir Stephen Arlitt, 63; Professor Sir Theodore Crawford, 74; Mr Maurice Deane, 76; Mr Christopher Lawrence, 49; Brigadier Sir Geoffrey Macrae, 86; Miss J. M. Quennell, 62; Herr Helmut Schmidt, 67.

Dinner

Variety Club of Great Britain. Dame Vera Lynn was the guest of honour at a dinner given by the Variety Club of Great Britain at the Hilton hotel last night to mark her 50th birthday. The dinner was attended by a large number of guests, including many members of the Variety Club.

University news

Cambridge. Wolfson College has chosen six journalists from Commonwealth countries to hold press fellowships at the college during 1986-87.

London. The title of professor has also been conferred on Dr J. W. Rose, of the department of mechanical engineering.

Glasgow. Honorary degrees will be conferred on the following in June: DD: The Rev. John Alexander Miller, Secretary of St Andrew's Church of Scotland, Glasgow; LL.D: Mr Robert Gavin London, Secretary of the Industry Department for Scotland and Chief Economic Adviser, Scottish Office; Mr Francis Joseph Meenan, U.S. Ambassador to East Germany; Mr Charles Allen Oakley, member of the general council of the university; Mr Alexander Stone, Chairman, Combined College Ltd, Glasgow; Mr Huang Xiang, member of the State Council, Institute of International Relations, Beijing, China.

D.Sc: Mr Chin Fung Koo, Tan Sri Professor emeritus of engineering, University of Malaya; Mr Stanley E. Kendrick, deputy chief scientific officer, Admiralty Research Establishment, Devonport, Fife; Mr Ian A. McGregor, director, West of Scotland Regional Plastic & Oral Surgery Unit, Camisburn Hospital, Glasgow; Professor Abdus Salam, professor of theoretical physics, Imperial College London; Professor Francis William Campbell, professor of neurosurgery, physiology, Cambridge University.

OBITUARY

MR WILETAM ALLEN

Leading figure in world aviation

Mr William McPherson Allen, who died in Seattle on October 29, aged 85, was as president of the Boeing Aircraft Company from 1945 to 1968, the architect of the rise of that company after the war to its dominant position in the manufacture of civil jet transport aircraft, military tankers and long-range strategic bombers.

In nearly 40 years of association with the Boeing company — first as its attorney, then as a director and, finally, as president and chairman of the Board — Allen brought exceptional qualities of foresight, integrity and leadership, combined with an innate modesty, all of which marked him as one of the great men of international aviation.

William M. Allen was born in 1900 of Scottish descent. After qualifying in law he joined the firm of Todd, Holmes and Prager of Seattle who among other responsibilities were counsel to the Boeing Airplane Company.

In 1934 Allen, who was by now the company's lawyer, was invited to join the board. It was at a critical time when the Boeing directors were faced with a decision on whether to risk the company's future by expending \$300,000 dollars of slender resources upon a private-venture entry into the Wright Field competition for a multi-engine bomber.

Allen took a decisive part in deciding to go ahead, a decision which, after setbacks, won an initial production order for 13 aircraft and went on to become the B-17 Flying Fortress of which, by 1945 some 6,890 had been built by Boeing at Seattle.

When Mr Phil Johnson, who had been president of the company through the war, died in 1945 Allen (a tough, down to earth, good humoured, lean and barking lawyer) was unanimously elected to succeed him alongside Mr Claire Egvedt as chairman.

Allen at once set himself eight prime objects — "let others talk, eschew detail, widen contacts, be definite, get things done, keep a sense of humour, temper determination with enthusiasm, and don't let obstacles get you down". During the next 13 years those precepts, faithfully followed, yielded remarkable results.

Allen consolidated and gathered round him an outstanding professional team. There followed a spate of successful designs, many of them launched at substantial risk to the company's fortunes but all of them founded upon a fortunately steady flow of military orders.

Between 1948 and 1956 there was the C-97 military tanker, developed from the B-17 bomber as was its civil counterpart, the 100-passenger Stratocruiser. In 1948, also, came the B-47 (jet-propelled) bomber of which Boeing supplied 1,373 to the US Air Force.

Between 1952 and 1962 a total of 722 of the vast, eight-engine B-52 Stratofortress strategic bomber were built by Boeing, and substantial numbers of developed versions are still in service.

After a visit by Allen and his chief designer to the Farneborough air display in 1950, where they saw the prototype De Havilland Comet, he decided to launch (at a substantial risk of the company's net worth) a competitive jet transport, hung on the peg of a prospective jet tanker to replace the C-97.

From this came the prototype four-jet model, 363-80 ("The Dash Eighty") which first flew in July, 1954, to be developed as the KC-135 Stratotanker (806 built) and the Boeing 707 jet transport (968 built).

This was followed in 1962 by the three-engine 727 (1831 built) and from 1969 by the Boeing 747 Jumbo jet of which, so far, more than 620 have been delivered.

Allen retired in 1968 as president, but remained chairman for some years. Well known throughout the aeronautical world, he was an immensely respected, but always modest, leader in world aviation distinguished by his courage, his soundness of decision, and by his sense of fun. He was an enthusiastic golfer, proud of his Scottish ancestry.

He is survived by his second wife Mary Ellen whom he married in 1950, and by whom he had two daughters.

SIR SEEWOSAGUR RAMGOOLAM

The Most Rev. Trevor Huddleston, CR, writes:

Perhaps, as a former Bishop of Mauritius who knew Sir Seewosagur and his massive achievements for his country, I may be allowed to add a human dimension to your obituary.

Like other great democratic leaders he acquired an affectionate nickname, "Cha Cha" — "Uncle" — which expressed the kind of relationship with his people that speaks for itself. It is not the kind of name given to dictators.

In fact, perhaps his finest quality was his respect for democratic procedure. When, after achieving independence for Mauritius and leading the country's government for nearly 20 years, his administration was swept from office, he resigned with dignity and certainly retained the respect and affection of his people. He remained "Cha Cha".

Sir Seewosagur loved England as his "second country", and showed this by the close links he maintained with University College and his hospital, and by his frequent visits here. But he showed it also by his immense respect for Parliament on the Westminster model.

Mauritius — that lovely island — is a microcosm of the world. Of its nearly one million inhabitants 600,000 are Hindu; a quarter of a million Christian; 150,000 Muslim, and there is a small but important Buddhist community as well.

Culturally it is equally diverse. Sir Seewosagur gave great attention to this diversity and, as I well know, showed a deep courtesy and respect to it in government.

Internationally he set Mauritius on a truly non-aligned path: he was both President of the Organization of African Unity (for two years) and a Commonwealth leader of influence in Asia and elsewhere.

Those who see in Mauritius, as I do, a shining example to the world of a society able to exist and flourish because of its racial, religious and cultural diversity, should reflect upon the debt they owe to its first Prime Minister.

The dinner was over. The drinks trolley was wheeled up and the waiter asked Elizabeth Kent, a perceptive restaurant critic of our acquaintance, if she wanted a brandy.

"To like a Macallan" she replied, looking forward to sherry-gold depths of delectation.

"That's not a brandy. That's a malt whisky, madam."

"I know."

The waiter became playful.

"You don't want a whisky. I know what madam would like..."

"So do I," said Elizabeth, gathering up her bag.

"Our lady customers never ask for whisky," the waiter explained as he jostled her into her coat. "It's a man's drink."

... Elizabeth Kent does not use words like 'sexist', but it was quivering on her pen as she reviewed the experience — only settling on a more considered reproof after a timely measure of the necessary balm.

THE MACALLAN. THE MALT

FINANCE AND INDUSTRY

Executive Editor Kenneth Fleet

Report for 1985: nice work if you can get it

Well, how did we do? A year ago, you may remember, the world recovery was supposed to be over, while the United States washed its hands of responsibility and the Latin American debtors threatened a rent strike. The miners' strike was playing hell with British figures anyway, while unemployment went grimly on rising. Public borrowing was over target. The pound was en route for parity with the dollar. A rise in inflation threatened.

Taken from the starting point of its early horrors, 1985 looks like a pretty good year. The pound bounced back, the miners' strike fizzled out, inflation peaked. The risks of default by large debtors increased rather than receded, but Argentina, the world's most inflation-prone economy, demonstrated what could be done. Then enter stage left, the US cavalry, headed by a treasury secretary aware that the world was round.

The world's economic recovery did, sure enough, slow down. The seven biggest industrial economies, according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, recorded growth of only 2.1 per cent, at an annual rate, in the first half of 1985, compared with 5.8 per cent in the first half of 1984. In the United States, growth in early 1985 slowed to a rate of only 1.7 per cent. The two biggest Europeans, France and Germany, went into a mini-recession: output stagnated in both economies in the first half of this year. Only Britain, with the artificial aid of an end to the miners' strike, accelerated - to a healthy 4 per cent growth rate in the first six months of this year.

But the world has picked up a bit since last spring. On the latest estimates (both the US Commerce Department's flash figure for the fourth quarter and OECD's year-end survey) the United States will only notch up about 2½ per cent of growth for 1985 as a whole, well below the 4 per cent forecast to which the Reagan Administration clung for an embarrassingly long time. But Europe looks healthier. Germany seems to have grown faster than any other leading economy over the past six months, juggling France up behind it.

British growth slowed down. The Bank of England's attempts to disentangle the effects of the strike reinforces this conclusion. According to the Bank, the underlying growth rate was 4 per cent last winter, and only about 1 per cent since spring. Even so, Britain is likely to come close to the Treasury's forecast of 3.5 per cent growth in the year as a whole. We have seen the first modest falls in unemployment, largely because demography and special employment measures are now slowing the growth in the labour force. Employment has not risen much. Indeed, the Bank's analysis of the "full-time equivalent" of the mixture of full and part-time jobs that have been appearing, suggests that by mid-year employment was in reality only a mere 24,000 higher than at its low point in early 1983.

The Government took stick for past rises in unemployment that partly reflected labour force changes, so it is not going to disclaim the bonus of a shrinking dole queue now. Nor, for that matter, is it going to disclaim the benefits of lower inflation. Here, however, we come to the uncomfortable British failures of 1985.

Pay and money are the obvious pair, inextricably interlinked. This was the year in which the Thatcher Government formally abandoned its broad money target barely halfway through the financial year. This could be dismissed as a mere technical mistake, stemming from bad forecasting of the wayward behaviour of the monetary aggregates. But the momentum of pay leaves an undercurrent of unease, exacerbated by the oil market, which a government without a clear money or exchange rate target has

endeavoured to assuage by keeping up interest rates.

This has been the year in which all the excuses for wage inflation ran out. Large - or at least varied - pay increases were at first explained away as a reflection of greater efficiency, as the economy shifted on to a higher level of productivity. Output per employee rose 9.3 per cent in 1983, virtually paying for a 9.7 per cent rise in earnings. But in the year to autumn, 1985, output per person rose a mere 2.2 per cent, while earnings still rose more than 9 per cent, so wage costs rose nearly 7 per cent for each unit of output.

The second excuse was that earnings naturally adjusted more slowly than prices to the new climate of low inflation, especially as the inflation rate kept falling faster than even the Treasury forecast. But in 1985, inflation "blipped", peaking higher than the Treasury forecast. Yet the gap between wage and price increases narrowed only slightly, because pay settlements edged up too.

The latest figures are a whisper more encouraging, and far more restrained than at this point in the last two economic cycles, when broken-down pay policies could not check a wage scramble. But Britain still compares unfavourably with its competitors. As OECD points out, in its usual circumspect fashion, the British are horribly slow learners.

The Japanese, unsurprisingly, absorbed the lessons of the last two cycles first. It is hard now to remember that Japan had an inflation rate of nearly 25 per cent in 1974. Fierce wage restraint brought it down to under 4 per cent by 1978. The Americans got the message in the early 1980s. The French, so often cited by the Thatcher Government as slower learners, now have lower inflation. Among Britain's chief competitors, only the Italians continue to run round the hamster wheel of wage-price rises.

The wonderful insularity of the British has encouraged them to believe that costs are under control because inflation was running along at an underlying rate of only about 5 per cent. While the exchange rate was falling, some pride in our lower inflation was justified. Through mid-1985, however, inflation was held down in Britain by falling commodity prices and a rising dollar exchange rate. This combination cut producer's input prices by 10 per cent between last spring and this autumn. But the combination of a higher exchange rate and heavy wage costs also made British goods more expensive than other people's, a danger reflected in CBI surveys of our export prospects. The pound's downward adjustment against the mark eased the competitive squeeze, but also alarmed the Government into reaffirming its tough interest-rate policy.

The final excuse for slow wage adjustment has been that cautious management takes time to feel its way into the new bargaining strength conferred by the Government's trade union legislation. This excuse, too, is beginning to wear a little thin. Perhaps the gloomiest feature of 1985 has been the way in which management has continued to fire workers in order to pay its remaining workforce more, rather than to hold down pay at levels where it was worthwhile taking on extra staff.

Those who believe all is working out for the best have explain why the result has recently been rising wage costs rather than rising productivity. Who should do what about this, however, is the stuff of New Year resolutions, suitably left until the 86 per cent of the labour force still in work has enjoyed a Christmas backed by an average 1985 increase in real purchasing power of close on 4 per cent.

Sarah Hogg
Economics Editor

Distillers considers complaint to Panel over Argyll figures

By William Kay and Jeremy Warner

Both sides in the battle for control of Distillers Company have been intensifying pressure on the authorities in the City and Whitehall, as the Christmas and New Year holidays loomed.

Distillers the Johnnie Walker whisky and Gordon's gin group, whose chairman is Mr John Connell, faces the possibility that in two weeks' time it may come under the control of Mr James Gulliver's Argyll Group, which owns Presto and Lipton supermarkets and has its own range of whiskies.

January 7 is the first closing date for Argyll's £1.9 billion bid, which has been fiercely resisted by Distillers with a hard-hitting advertising campaign. But the Distillers management was considering over the weekend whether to complain formally to the City Takeover Panel about figures used by Argyll in its advertising to discredit Distillers' performance.

Argyll for its part has been



Question of ownership: from left, James Gulliver, Sir Gordon Barrie and John Connell.

coralling the Scottish lobby, behind a campaign to head off an inquiry into the deal by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

Mr Gordon Barrie of the Office of Fair Trading must advise the Department of Trade and Industry on this question.

Sir James Gulliver, the chairman of the Scottish Conservative Party, said yesterday: "I do not think the bid should be referred as it should bring so

much back to Scotland. Distillers has been operating to all intents and purposes from London, while Mr Gulliver says that he will create 300 jobs in Scotland if he wins. That would be excellent."

Another influential Scot, who did not want to be named, said: "At present, I can see certain regional economic advantage to the bid. I would not know on what basis a monopolies referral would be made, and I would

guess that that opinion is widely held throughout Scotland."

Meanwhile Distillers is angered by statistics used by Argyll to support a claim that Distillers has mismanaged Johnnie Walker, the largest and most profitable of the groups whisky subsidiaries.

Argyll claims that the world market share of Red and Black label whisky has fallen from 17 per cent to 13 per cent since 1977.

In the United States, the world's largest market, Red label has lost 15 per cent of its sales volume, according to Mr Gulliver.

Mr David Connell, managing director of Johnnie Walker, said Argyll's figures were inaccurate and misleading and failed to present a true picture of the world whisky market.

He said that the true loss of world volume sales by Red and Black label was not a third, but only 18 per cent and most of that was due to the forced withdrawal of Red label from the British market because of a row with the European Economic Community on pricing.

Oil price slump likely to continue

By David Young
Energy Correspondent

World oil prices are expected to fall further after Christmas, with Canada and the Soviet Union advising contract customers of a cut in their official prices.

The slump in prices following the meeting of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) two weeks ago slowed down last week in very light trading, but dealers predict further falls when trading for February and March opens later this week.

Prices of North Sea crude for February delivery are close to the \$23 a barrel mark compared with more than \$28 two weeks ago.

The special Opec committee formed to establish methods of defending the cartel's market share at around 18 million barrels a day is due to meet in early February at a time when several analysts are suggesting a slump in demand.

Mr Humphries Harris, oil analyst at Fielding, Newsom Smith, the stockbroker, said: "In such a strong buyers' market as is likely to develop in the spring, characterized by almost total price flexibility, political and strategic considerations could well rival commercial criteria in determining the source of a major buyer's crude supplies."

The prevalence of such non-commercial considerations could only add to the uncertainties ahead.

"Such extreme uncertainty nullifies the assumptions on which planning and new investment must be based, and severely undermines current medium and long-term OECD growth projections."

Consortium still to sign for Canary Wharf

By Our City Staff

The consortium of US banks planning to develop 10 million sq ft of offices at Canary Wharf in East London has still to sign an agreement with the London Docklands Development Corporation.

The consortium, headed by Financiere Credit Suisse First Boston Group, Morgan Stanley and First Boston Real Estate, has so far agreed only to an option on the Canary Wharf site which is in the Docklands enterprise zone.

The corporation is putting the scheme to a large number of groups and councils affected by the project in a lengthy consultation process which could take place until March.

The ambitious development is also dependent on the progress of the Docklands Light Railway Bill, which is now awaiting parliamentary discussion time.

British stake

Control Data Corporation of America has sold control of its Hastings subsidiary, Computing Devices, for £7.5 million. A syndicate of British investors, led by 3i, has bought 47.5 per cent of the company designs and makes products for the military electronics field. Directors and staff have bought 5 per cent. Control Data retains 47.5 per cent.

MARKET SUMMARY

Sydney: AO	986.5 (+10.5)
Frankfurt	
Commerzbank	1871.1 (+59.9)
Brussels	
General	895.77 (+18.78)
Paris: CAC	252.4 (+2.1)
Zurich	
SKA General	487.20 (+5.5)

CURRENCIES

Friday's close and change on week		Friday's close and change on week	
FT Ind Ord	1108.9 (+2.7)	London	51.4245 (-0.0025)
FT All Share	870.98 (+0.22)	Yan	51.4245 (-0.0025)
FT Gov Securities	82.85 (-0.30)	DM	51.4245 (-0.0025)
FT-SE 100	1386.5 (+5.35)	SwF	3.0120 (-0.0120)
Borleans	22.845 (-1.238)	FF	11.0027 (-0.0867)
Dutchmark	104.28 (-)		
New York	1543.00 (+7.79)		
Dow Jones	1543.00 (+7.79)		
Tokyo	13011.09 (+3.11)		
Nikkei Dow	13011.09 (+3.11)		
Hong Kong	1720.18 (-15.42)		
Hang Seng	250.8 (+12.3)		
Amsterdam	250.8 (+12.3)		

BOARD MEETINGS

TODAY - Intertec: Bermuda International Bond Fund (interim dividend), Glaxo Group (second interim dividend), May and West: Finance House (annual general meeting), Anchor International Fund (interim dividend), Finance House (annual general meeting).

Cameron Webb to leave Miami firm

By Mike Graham in New York and Allison Eadie

Mr Peter Cameron Webb, the disgraced former Lloyd's underwriter, has resigned as underwriter and general manager of Lincoln Underwriting, a Miami insurance firm.

The governor of the Miami Insurance Exchange, Mr William Sudowski, said that it had been informed of Mr Cameron Webb's resignation after Lloyd's disciplinary report was published.

The letter of resignation was dated last Wednesday and is dated from December 31.

Sudowski said the exchange's committee was investigating before it received the letter of resignation. But since Mr Cameron Webb had resigned the matter was closed.

He added: "At no time did anyone suggest that Mr Cameron Webb committed any impropriety while working for Lincoln."

He said that if Mr Cameron Webb had not resigned it might have been necessary for the exchange to act but, he said, there had been no complaints against him.

An associate of Mr Cameron Webb who refused to be named said that he was still in Miami last Friday. Mr Cameron Webb

refused to be interviewed, and his lawyer, Mr Curtis Fitterson, was unavailable for comment.

Mr Cameron Webb avoided being disciplined by Lloyd's because he resigned before the disciplinary section in the 1982 Lloyd's Act became enforceable.

He and Mr Peter Dixon were the masterminds behind an elaborate network of offshore companies, which between 1968 and 1982 syphoned £39 million out of Lloyd's syndicates.

Mr Dixon personally benefited by more than £12 million and Mr Cameron Webb by more than £6 million.

Some observers in the Lloyd's market feel that some of the sentences imposed by Lloyd's disciplinary tribunals were too light.

In a booklet sent to his names, a leading Lloyd's underwriter, Mr Stephen Merrett, says: "The enormous delays that have taken place in advising names about major investigation and the bringing of miscreants to account are, in our view, paralleled in some cases by the extraordinary levity of the sentences in view of the seriousness of the crimes of which people have been accused."

Banks face tougher rules to protect depositors

By Richard Thomson, Banking Correspondent

The clearing banks are likely to be forced to provide better protection, against their will, for their depositors as part of the new measures to tighten regulations in the City.

The change will increase the maximum amount paid out to individual depositors under the Deposit Protection Scheme, which compensates victims of banks which fail, from £10,000 to £20,000. This will bring it in line with the new Investment Compensation Scheme envisaged in last week's Financial Services Bill.

The deposit protection schemes laid out in the recent banking supervision and building society legislation set a maximum payout of £10,000, but this can be changed at any time by order. The increase to £20,000 is unlikely to take place before the Financial Services Bill becomes law.

The banks, however, are unhappy at having any protection scheme at all for their depositors. "It simply means secure banks having to bail out weak ones," a spokesman for the British Bankers Association said.

"Many banks will be involved in investment areas covered by the investment compensation scheme and will have to contribute to that as well. They will be bailing out bucket shops all over the country," he added.

The banks managed to have the original proposal of a £20,000 maximum payout reduced by half in the banking supervision White paper.

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Sterling set to start ferries bid

By Our City Editor

Sir Jeffrey Stirling, the chairman of Peninsular & Oriental Steamship Company, is believed to be poised to make a play for European Ferries that could culminate in a full-scale bid for the company.

According to stock market sources, this could in turn be the first move in a complicated sequence designed to bring Stock Conversion and Stockley, two significant property companies, into the P&O orbit as well.

A P&O spokesman refused to comment on a suggestion in *The Sunday Times* that the company may be about to compile a 15 per cent stake in Euroferries, the Townsend Thoresen group, as a prelude to a takeover bid.

However, as *The Times* reported last week, the City is rife with rumours that Sir Jeffrey's plans are well advanced.

Euroferries has a potential 29.9 per cent stake in Stockley, one of whose guiding lights is Mr Elliott Bernerd, a former associate of Sir Jeffrey.

Company men step up at Grand Met

By Our City Staff

Grand Metropolitan, the catering group, is to have three new board members, the first executive directors to be appointed for almost five years.

They come from the company's flourishing wines, brewing and food operations. Mr George Bull, chief executive of the wines and spirits division, Mr Ian Martin, chief executive of the brewing division, and Mr Clive Strouger, chief executive of the foods division, join the board immediately.

The trio will retain their present positions in addition to being executive directors. Grand Metropolitan says the appointments fit within the company's existing structure and there are no plans to change it.

ORDINARY SHARES

A liquid inspiration from Santa

It was Christmas Eve, and a chill wind blew along the City's deserted streets. In the basement of one of the more down-at-heel merchant banks the below-stairs staff were having their annual party.

"What a year it's been," muttered the oldest retainer. "While the rest of the City's been going mad, making money hand over fist, our lot haven't been involved in a single takeover, they didn't do one flotation, and they never even got a sniff of the Channel tunnel business." He spat in the grate. "No wonder it's chicken left-overs instead of turkey yet again."

"I've got an idea," piped up young Tom, the tea boy, who fancied himself as something of an amateur whiz-kid, "what about a management buyout?"

"You must be kidding," said the chief messenger, "not only would our directors not know how to go about it, they couldn't afford themselves."

"No, no, not them," replied Tom, "how about us doing a buyout? If we wrote off to enough people, on the company notepaper, of course, we'd be bound to raise the cash."

"True," mused the head porter. "It seems you just have to put your hand up these days to have someone filling it with cash. After all, we might be dining at the Ritz tonight if less of our firm's money had gone chasing some of these fast schemes you hear about. But what would we do with the money?"

"No problem," said Tom, who was getting fairly carried away. "We could put it in the

Price	Market Value	Dividend	Yield	P.E.R.	Dividend Cover
P	£M	%	%		
Anglo-Indo Corp.	145	8.6	7.39	2.8	4.88
Antioch Ltd.	300	19.2	7.38	4.3	4.37
Blagden Inds.	112	32.8	9.18	8.6	2.48
Brit. Petroleum	546	9981.0	8.37	8.4	2.43
Finlay James	84	76.5	7.06	4.8	3.27
Garnier Goods	183	15.7	7.67	4.8	4.02
Hunting Group	85	19.0	10.08	4.1	2.41
Int. Leisure	96	48.6	7.14	4.9	4.04
Lookers	81	7.4	7.22	6.6	2.99
Manganese Bronze	52	8.0	8.24	6.9	2.61
Ocean Wilsons	52	13.8	8.10	5.5	2.64
Ropner	126	27.9	7.37	6.1	3.19
Shall Transport	651	7192.5	7.37	5.8	2.32
STC	88	480.6	9.33	6.1	2.47
Stocklake Hldgs	170	7.2	10.08	3.4	3.01
Uko Int.	96	13.5	7.44	6.7	2.85
Whessoe	96	17.3	8.19	6.0	2.91

stock market. I overheard one of our richer clients chatting in reception about what he was going to do next year."

"I've warned you before about earwigging conversations you don't understand," the oldest retainer croaked. "So what did he say?"

"Well, I didn't understand all of it at first, so I switched my Walkman to 'record', and this is what it picked up," Tom explained.

"If you want my opinion, I think it's going to be a very tricky year in the market next year. There are a lot of people sitting on fat profits, and the big bang is going to be quite a distraction. All you will need is for interest rates to go higher and things could look very sticky."

"So I am going to go a little more liquid as the year progresses. That will also give me the chance to take advantage of some of the special situations

that are still likely to crop up. "Newcomers will want to go public while the market is at these levels, and one or two of the privatizations will be worth having - British Gas and British Airways certainly."

"And it will still be worth playing the old takeover game. You know, buy on a contested bid and wait for the almost inevitable increase in terms."

"But, for the rest, I think caution must be the watchword. The traditional reaction is to dive into defensive sectors like breweries and tobacco, what's left of them. But since my brokers let me fiddle around with their Datastream terminal, I've tried to sort out a more scientific portfolio."

"Of course, it's all a delusion, because it's only as scientific as the criteria you select. My criterion is my lucky number, seven. So I've picked a list of companies with a dividend yield of more than 7 per cent, a life

ratio of less than seven and a market capitalization of more than £7 million, just to weed out the real toddlers."

"Oh, and one other thing: you have to be sure that the company can pay the dividend, so it is worth checking that it is covered by earnings."

"Of what's left, there are rather a lot of companies in the wake of the recent fitters in the oil market. But as that shrewd chap in *The Times* pointed out the other Monday, you can't go far wrong if you stick to BP and Shell."

"Otherwise, there are some interesting recovery situations lurking in the list, including poor old STC and a couple of shipping companies. Ropner and Ocean Wilsons. One or two, like International Leisure, are just not undervalued. It's a mixed bag, but on the whole it shouldn't be a bad portfolio to go into 1986 with."

"That was the moment when the chairman called down for a fresh pot of tea," said Tom, "but with those clues I got the list printed out and here it is. Not bad, eh?"

"What did this fellow look like?"

"Oh, it's that retired bloke who pops in every year about this time, I forget his name."

"White beard, red overcoat and a load of reindeer parked on the double yellow line outside, is that the one?"

"Now you mention it, yes."

"I thought so. Maybe if we ask him nicely, he'll state us for that buyout plan of yours..."

William Kay
City Editor

THE TIMES Portfolio

From your Portfolio card check your eight share price movements. Add them up to give you your overall total. Check this against the daily dividend figure published on this page. If it matches you have won outright or a share of the total daily prize money stated. If you are a winner, follow the claim procedure on the back of your card. You must always have your card available when claiming.

No.	Company	Year	Share Price
1	BUILDING AND ROADS		
2	Widened (Company)		
3	Magnet & South		
4	Tennant		
5	Robertson		
6	Tennant		
7	Northampton Brick		
8	Br Dredging		
9	Myer Int		
10	Went		
11	DRAPERY AND STORES		
12	Dunhill		
13	Tennant		
14	Woolworth		
15	Went		
16	Lee Choyee		
17	Freemans		
18	Elect		
19	Elect (S)		
20	Brown (S)		
21	ELECTRICALS		
22	IBL		
23	Newman		
24	Ferranti		
25	City Elect		
26	Micro IS		
27	Multimedia Elec		
28	Amrad		
29	Devihurst 'A'		
30	Newman (Lanc)		
31	Lee (John J)		
32	Hardwood Foods		
33	Corn Milling		
34	Dix		
35	Lowell (G)		
36	Food (S)		
37	Par Foods		
38	Glen Glover		
39	Yate & Lyle		
40	Fisher (Albert)		

Weekly Dividend						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN

BRITISH FUNDS						
Stock	Out-Market	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open

SHORTS (Under Five Years)						
Year	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close
1980						
1981						
1982						
1983						
1984						
1985						

FIVE TO FIFTEEN YEARS						
Year	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close
1980						
1981						
1982						
1983						
1984						
1985						

OVER FIFTEEN YEARS						
Year	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close
1980						
1981						
1982						
1983						
1984						
1985						

UNDATED						
Year	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close
1980						
1981						
1982						
1983						
1984						
1985						

INDEX-LINKED						
Year	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close
1980						
1981						
1982						
1983						
1984						
1985						

Prospective real redemption yield on projected inflation rate (RPI) of 4.5% and 5.0%

BREWERIES						
Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

BANKS DISCOUNT HP						
Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

STOCK EXCHANGE PRICES

Capitalization and week's change

ACCOUNT DAYS: Dealings Begin, Today. Dealings End, Jan 10. 5 Contingency Day, Jan 13. Settlement Day, Jan 20.

Forward bargains are permitted on two previous days.

(Current market price multiplied by the number of shares in issue for the stock quoted)

Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

BUILDING AND ROADS							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

CHEMICALS, PLASTICS							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

CINEMA AND TV							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

DRAPERY AND STORES							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

ELECTRICALS							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

FINANCE AND LAND							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

FOODS							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

HOTELS AND CATERERS							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

INDUSTRIALS A-D							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

INDUSTRIALS E-K							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

INDUSTRIALS L-R							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

INDUSTRIALS S-Z							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

INSURANCE							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

LEISURE							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

MINING							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

PROPERTY							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

SHIPPING							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

SHOES AND LEATHER							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

TEXTILES							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

TOBACCO							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

MOTORS AND AIRCRAFT							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

NEWSPAPERS AND PUBLISHERS							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

OIL							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

OVERSEAS TRADERS							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

PAPER, PRINTING, ADVERTISING							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

THE TIMES Portfolio							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

DAILY DIVIDEND							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

Claims required for +55 points							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

Claimants should ring 0254-53272							
Capitalization	Company	Share	Price	Chg	On	Open	Close

THE TIMES Portfolio
DAILY DIVIDEND
£2,000
Claims required for
+55 points
Claimants should ring 0254-53272

Die deep - gold bene
the industria

Powerful Becker makes Wilander feel the draught in Davis Cup

From Rex Bellamy, Tennis Correspondent, Munich

Boris Becker, the Wimbledon champion, beat Mats Wilander, champion of France, by 6-3, 2-6, 6-3, 6-3 in two hours and a quarter in the Davis Cup final yesterday. This meant that West Germany and Sweden were 2-2 with one match to play. The deciding match was between Becker and Wilander, who is ranked 46 places below him.

Becker overpowered Wilander on a fast court that suited the German. Becker not only served well. He also hit some violent winners with his ground strokes. He was always ready to gamble with his service returns and many of these left Wilander flustered.

Becker was particularly strong on the forehand but also hit a few backhand passing shots that took Wilander by surprise. At times the disparity in weight of shot was such that Wilander almost looked a lightweight.

It soon became evident that Wilander was not turning his two-handed backhand as well as usual and as the match went on there were a few hints - gestures of frustration - that the deficiency was preying on his mind. Nor was Wilander as nimble and springy as he can be on most big occasions. It seemed, too, that sometimes he found Becker's game difficult to "read".

Wilander does not give much away, whether one speaks in terms of points or feelings. But his face often spoke volumes as blazing winners sped past him.

Doubtless he felt he draught, but that only told him he had lost a point. It was a mistimed backhand that cost Wilander a service break in the first set. In the second set he had some luck when Becker served three double-faults in one game. That gave Wilander the set at 6-2 but in that game he owed much to a briefly listless performance by Becker, who was beginning to look in need of a second wind.

Wilander won nine points in a row, which was encouraging. But the second game of the third set Becker won a superb rally with a delightful cross-court forehand dink. That induced him to give his new familiar demonstration of the Becker wiggle. It also seemed to inspire him and he broke through for 2-1 and, frankly, was never in serious trouble again. He served 13 aces, which more than compensated for his seven double-faults. Wilander served five aces.

Earlier this year Wilander beat Becker easily in Paris but the opposite happened when they met in Cincinnati. "He gave me a practice with the hour in Paris and I gave him one in Cincinnati", Becker said later. "This was the best match of three." It was indeed - and Becker's performance in winning it earned him an ovation that suggested he had just declared independence for Bavaria.

The first day's singles had been shared and Germany had

reason to be optimistic, though not confident, about Saturday's doubles. But Wilander and Joakim Nystrom, Sweden's "reserve" pair, took only 78 minutes to crush Becker and Andreas Maurer by 6-4, 6-2, 6-1. The Germans must have felt they were on the wrong end of a rifle range during a rapid-fire exercise. Their failure to make a match of it was embarrassing and demoralizing.

The two Swedes are good chums and familiar partners with a distinguished tournament record. They played a blinder. By contrast, the Germans are acquaintances rather than friends, seldom play in harness, and went downhill with increasing momentum after a bad start.

The outstanding feature of the match was the quality of Sweden's service returns and the quick reactions with which they exploited ensuing openings. On the other hand, the only hint of a German breakthrough occurred when Wilander was serving at 3-2 and 15-40 in the first set.

Nystrom, playing his first Davis Cup doubles, reminded everyone that in the Wimbledon and United States championships he showed an enviable talent for dealing with Becker's service. The Swedes treated Maurer's modest service as an invitation to a party. He lost five of his six service games, and was 0-30 down in the set.

Maurer said later that he usually volleyed well but, this



Becker signals his victory over Wilander yesterday

GYMNASTICS

Bartlett is brilliant for Britain

By Peter Aykroyd

Britain commendably captured two silver medals in the Kraft International at Wembley over the weekend when Terry Bartlett, the British champion, came second overall and runner-up in the floor exercise final. His overall success - the best ever by a British male gymnast in this eight-nation competition - was achieved despite a bruised shoulder which restrained his attack in his pommel horse and rings routine.

In yesterday's apparatus final, the brilliant Bartlett showed a mastery of balance and strength by taking the floor and ring's gold medals. The remaining men's gold - and honours - were shared by

Marian Penev, of Bulgaria (pommel horse), Zhao Jiansue, of China (vault), Gennadiy Rybin, of the Soviet Union (parallel bars) and Zhong Limin, of China (horizontal bar).

The women's apparatus final emerged as a keen duel between the old rivals, the Soviet Union and Romania, with the Soviet Union capturing three golds to Romania's one. The Soviet, Elena Zbrodina, won on vault, asymmetric bars and floor, but Yurcenko's vault from a back flip was especially noteworthy. Her Romanian challenger, Dana Dumitru, won the silver medals on these pieces but dined the beam gold with the routine

which began with a startling one-handed back flip mount.

On Saturday, however, Miss Zbrodina had won the overall women's competition decisively.

Zhou took the overall men's title after taking control following a flowing pommel horse routine.

Men's Overall: 1. Zhou Lin (58.55), 2. T. Bartlett (58.00), 3. Zhao Jiansue (57.85), 4. Zbrodina (57.80), 5. Rybin (57.75), 6. Penev (57.70), 7. Limin (57.65), 8. Dumitru (57.60), 9. Zbrodina (57.55), 10. Penev (57.50), 11. Limin (57.45), 12. Dumitru (57.40), 13. Zbrodina (57.35), 14. Penev (57.30), 15. Limin (57.25), 16. Dumitru (57.20), 17. Zbrodina (57.15), 18. Penev (57.10), 19. Limin (57.05), 20. Dumitru (57.00).



High flyer: Hans Peter Pohl, of West Germany, retains his lead in the Nordic skiing World Cup at Tignes, Italy, on Saturday

RUGBY LEAGUE

St Helens never recover from defensive mistakes

By Keith Macklin

The value of Harry Pinner, the St Helens and Great Britain loose forward, was cruelly emphasized by Hull Kingston Rovers in the John Player Special Trophy semi-final at Wembley on Saturday.

St Helens were demolished 22-4 by the holders who took advantage both of Pinner's absence through injury and of crucial Saints' errors to run in four tries without reply. Rovers now meet Wigan in the final at Elland Road on January 11.

Rovers showed brutal professionalism as they tackled mercilessly and moved the ball with confidence despite the dreadful conditions. A penalty goal by Conlan put St Helens ahead, but once Rovers had capitalized on a defensive mistake by French the holders were never seriously challenged. French, knocked on near his own line, and from the scrum Miller, his fellow Australian, went through to score.

Further poor defence by the Saints allowed Clark the winger, to beat four attempted tackles as he touched down in the corner. In the second half Hogan got the third try after a St Helens passing movement had broken down near the line, and

salt was finally rubbed into the wound when Hogan sent in Smith unchallenged for the final try. Dorchy kicked three goals.

Haggerty and Platt made some brave breaks for St Helens, for whom Conlan kicked a second penalty, but without Pinner they were never a cohesive force.

In yesterday's championship games a disjointed and out-of-sorts Hull side were beaten by Swinton, who played with great spirit to come back from 6-0 down to win 16-8. Widnes returned to form by winning at York 26-8. Leeds beat Castleford 26-18 despite having Dick sent off, and Halifax and Wigan fought out a top of the table 12-12 draw. At the foot of the table Bradford Northern got off the bottom by winning at Dewsbury, Woods getting a fine individual try, and Featherstone Rovers beat a disappointing Warrington 27-14. Boyd, Warrington's Australian forward, was sent off.

In the second division there were comfortable wins for the Rochdale Hornets, Leigh and Runcorn, and Fulham hammered Runcorn Highfield 44-2.

BOXING

Kacar staggers to title

Pesaro, Italy (AFP) - Slobodan Kacar, of Yugoslavia, is the new International Boxing Federation light-heavyweight champion after beating Eddie Mustafa Muhammad of the United States on points over 15 rounds for the vacant title here on Saturday.

Michael Spinks, who resigned in order to fight Larry Holmes for the IBF heavyweight title in September, was expected to win a heavyweight championship.

Seoul (AFP) - Chung Jung-Kwan, of South Korea, won the International Boxing Federation flyweight title when he was awarded a fourth-round technical knock-out victory over the defending champion Kwon Sun-Chon, also of South Korea. Kwon was bleeding from a cut opened up over his right eye in the third round when the Japanese referee Fujimoto Yasuhiro stopped the fight in the fourth.

GOLF

PORT ELIZABETH, South Africa: Sunshine International tournament: Leading final scores (all South Africa) 202 D. Wessing, 71, 70, 72, 69, 282; 2. D. Wessing, 71, 70, 72, 68, 281; 3. D. Wessing, 71, 70, 72, 68, 281; 4. D. Wessing, 71, 70, 72, 68, 281; 5. D. Wessing, 71, 70, 72, 68, 281; 6. D. Wessing, 71, 70, 72, 68, 281; 7. D. Wessing, 71, 70, 72, 68, 281; 8. D. Wessing, 71, 70, 72, 68, 281; 9. D. Wessing, 71, 70, 72, 68, 281; 10. D. Wessing, 71, 70, 72, 68, 281; 11. D. Wessing, 71, 70, 72, 68, 281; 12. D. Wessing, 71, 70, 72, 68, 281; 13. D. Wessing, 71, 70, 72, 68, 281; 14. D. Wessing, 71, 70, 72, 68, 281; 15. D. Wessing, 71, 70, 72, 68, 281; 16. D. Wessing, 71, 70, 72, 68, 281; 17. D. Wessing, 71, 70, 72, 68, 281; 18. D. Wessing, 71, 70, 72, 68, 281; 19. D. Wessing, 71, 70, 72, 68, 281; 20. D. Wessing, 71, 70, 72, 68, 281; 21. D. Wessing, 71, 70, 72, 68, 281; 22. D. Wessing, 71, 70, 72, 68, 281; 23. D. Wessing, 71, 70, 72, 68, 281; 24. D. Wessing, 71, 70, 72, 68, 281; 25. D. 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Football: rescue plan is in operation to save broken heart of the Welsh game

The spirit of Swansea holds on for dear life

Croker and Bingham admit flaws in World Cup format

By Stuart Jones

By Stuart Jones
Football Correspondent

The funeral procession was pathetic, said the Swansea fans, only a few of them, stood in the driving rain outside the entrance to a graveyard known as the Vetch Field and cried, "We'll support you ever more". It was three o'clock on Saturday, the time for Swansea City to be officially put to rest, and even the surrounding hills were draped in black.

Way above the tiny Welsh club towered the new stand, an appropriately named headstone. It cost £200,000 to construct and the inconvenience of local residents, it is the only remaining tangible evidence of the club's lavishly wild optimism that was to prove fatal.

But before the burial was complete, five men in particular were talking. Peter Howard, Harry Roberts, Bobby Jones, Mel Nurse and Dave Savage, all Swansea club directors, plan to meet Don Landsown, Labour MP for Swansea East, to discuss their plans for forming a new company to be called Swansea City 86.

The quieter, having pledged £200,000, must raise at least another £200,000 to fulfil the Football League's requirements. The sum

includes the share issue of £350,000, and debts of some £200,000 to be paid in full to the Inland Revenue and the Customs and Excise, and other creditors such as Liverpool, need to receive 70 per cent of the money owed to them.

Landsown admitted that "the chances must be pretty slender but this is not the folding of a small company. Swansea City Football Club affects the reputation of this city. There can be no other city of this size that has no League team, so everything must be done to secure some sort of future."

A QC has been appointed to make application in the High Court today for a 10-day stay of execution of the winding-up order. If this is successful the Swansea players who were dismissed on Friday have agreed to pay the Boxing Day game against Cardiff City without pay.

Also, Landsown is to contact the local and West Glamorgan city councils in an attempt to gain their support. The five directors, as well as appealing to the Welsh Football Association, are pleading for businesses, clubs and individuals to buy shares. "I know we are clutching at straws," Hyle said, "but that's what desperate men do, especially when they're drowning."

They trust that the League, which allowed Charlton Athletic to postpone a fixture in similar circumstances last season, will view equally sympathetically the enforced cancellation of their game against Walsall on Saturday. But they appreciate that if the traditional Boxing Day derby against Cardiff City does not take place, "we will no longer have a football club".

Some might say that Swansea does not deserve one. Perhaps they should be held up as an example to others and pay the highest price for losing a dangerously ambitious gamble that was taken when John Toshack was the manager, Malcolm Struel, the chairman and the team lay 91st in the League.

Toshack brought with him the ideologies of his old club, Liverpool, as well as several of their experienced players. Within four years they had climbed to the peak, and it seemed deeply poignant that Bill Shankly, Toshack's mentor, who has described him as "the manager of the century", should die a few days before Swansea visited Anfield as League leaders for the first time.

Toshack, controversially, took off his track suit before the minute's silence to reveal the red shirt of Liverpool. Swansea's abnormally heavy financial burden was to be exposed as

well. The cost of the side, more than £1.5 million, their exorbitant wages, as well as the new stand could not even begin to be balanced by the club's gate receipts.

Like Bristol City and Wolverhampton Wanderers, the rise in their financial difficulties coincided with the fall of the team's fortunes. Swansea, forced to sell their most talented individuals, plummeted from the first division to the third. As attendance steadily declined, they were fighting not for success but for survival. Predictably they failed.

But Swansea can justifiably claim to be more than an 85-year-old club. As one whose grandfather and father both were famous all-white strip, and who first glimpsed the professional game from the Vetch Field terraces, that is stated for more than personal reasons. It was undeniably once, and arguably still is, the heart of Welsh football.

John Charles, one of Swansea's most famous sons, remembers that eight of the Wales side that reached the quarter-finals of the 1958 World Cup Finals were born there. Other gifted players such as Trevor Ford, Roy Paul, Ivor and Len Allchurch, Cliff Jones, Terry Medwin and John's brother Mel were all jewels in the National crown.

The Official Receiver will today be

presented with the additional information for which he has asked, and unless his verdict is favourable, more than the strongest link with Wales's past will have been severed. The future of the one British country excluded from next summer's World Cup Finals will be in danger as well.

Gordon Taylor, the Secretary of the Professional Footballers Association, which at one stage recently was paying Swansea's wages also fears that "there are likely to be a dozen other League clubs who could soon follow them into oblivion".

The hope that Swansea will not be banished stretches far beyond the boundaries of Wales. Taylor, conceding that "we will need a miracle". It seems probable that the registrations of the players will be taken over by the League, that the third division table will have to be amended (all of Swansea's matches so far will be declared void) and that the stadium will shortly be pulled down.

The Vetch, standing in the shadow of the prison, was sold to the local authority for £50,000 by the club in now worth an estimated £2 million. Ironically more than the amount required so urgently by the group of would-be saviours. If the finances had not become such a sorry shambles, there would have been no need for Saturday's swan song.

Ted Croker, secretary of the Football Association, and Billy Bingham, manager of Northern Ireland, yesterday accepted that there are anomalies in the format of the World Cup Finals in Mexico next summer.

A report in *The Sunday Times* yesterday examined the difference in the odds against the six teams who finished third in their group in the first round. One from Colombia will enter the last 16 and it has been proved statistically that the chances of Group A's representatives going through are significantly lower than those of Group E.

The figures were given as Group A 47 per cent, C and D (including Northern Ireland) 54 per cent, E (including Scotland) 75 per cent, and B and F (including England) 85 per cent. There are 720 different combinations involving the finishing order of the third-placed teams and in 348 of them a side with a record superior to the four that survive could be eliminated.

Croker said: "We looked at the possibilities after the draw and we realised there were differences, though we hadn't worked out the figures in detail. It seems that those with a weak country in their group, who may finish in a poor position, have a better chance of reaching the second round."

The differences in the odds are not significant except in the extreme cases. The Mexicans had to get away from the formula that was used in Spain three years ago, when West Germany and Austria, for instance, both knew what they had to do in their last first-round match against each other.

"I thought they might use a league system and go on points gained, goal difference, and then goals scored. But the timing rules that out. They have tried to give everybody two days' rest between the end of their first-round matches and the start of the knock-out games."

That seems fair. The trouble is that whichever system you use, there are bound to be flaws. All we are talking about is the two

countries who will not go through in spite of finishing third in their group. I don't think that there can be much room for complaint."

Bingham said that the draw is "chanceless in certain ways". The hosts traditionally do well. I think five of them have won their own tournament. I remember playing in 1985 when Sweden got to the final but nobody expected them to. This draw may favour Mexico, but you expect it to be designed that way.

"We have to be philosophical and accept it. We know that we can't

Yugoslav manager stands down

Belgrade (AP) - The manager of the Yugoslav national team, Milos Milutinovic, has resigned in the aftermath of his country's failure to reach the World Cup finals. Milutinovic, the coach after the Yugoslav team's failure in the European Championship finals in France last year, said his decision was "irrevocable".

"I hope to go to Mexico, where Milutinovic's brother Bora is manager of the host country's national team, ended when they lost 2-0 to France in Paris last month.

afford more than one defeat in the first round and we have been fortunate that we start against the bottom team, Algeria. By the time we face Brazil in our last game, we hope that they will have already qualified.

"Our odds have been given as 54 per cent. Call it 50-50, that will do me. After all, our chances were given as quite slim before the World Cup Finals in Spain. It's all in the past at this stage. Anyway, I'm just looking for a good start in our group."

Forest refusal

Nottingham Forest have refused football Association of Ireland officials permission to approach Brian Clough about their vacant team manager's position.

Arsenal challenge stays low-key

By David Powell

Manchester United.....0 Arsenal.....1

As if taking maximum points in successive matches from England's two most formidable clubs was not enough, Don Howe gained some ground through the Press on Saturday. "I still think the championship is about Liverpool and United, one of the two will win it," the Arsenal manager said. Sincere views, no doubt, but of more value in keeping the pressure off his team than in calving down discussion about where the title might end up.

Had Arsenal come back into the reckoning? "Our best hope is to keep chasing." Would Howe be satisfied with third? "We'll keep battling." Exemplary defence, characterized the present Arsenal trademark of giving nothing away. "A good cup run" was all he would publicly say of his embryonic side this season.

With a place in the Milk Cup quarter-finals already secured, Arsenal's rejuvenation augurs well for their FA Cup chances too. The Becker-like fearlessness of the team's defence, which revived the spirits of more senior players. Keown, Caesars and Quinn have played three, one and two matches respectively and Howe says: "They have given us a little bit of life. Keown, especially, looks a hell of a good player."

No one at Old Trafford could argue that point. He and O'Leary restricted Stapleton and Hughes to

one chance apiece. Stapleton wasted his by heading wide of an open goal in the last minute and Hughes found Quinn in the way of his goalbound shot. Arsenal's 1-0 victory over Liverpool, having scored on his debut against Liverpool, now plotted United's downfall. His low shot 15 minutes from time was too awkward for Stevie to head and Nicholas scored from the back.

Thus was Whiteside's first-half penalty miss expensive. Davis, deceived by Olsen's speed, tripped him and, though Lukic takes credit for getting down by his post, Whiteside's own admission "was a bit like a back pass." But it was the closest shot that Lukic had to deal with, the others from Whiteside and Blackmore, were struck from outside the area.

Having ended Liverpool's 14-match unbeaten run and penetrated United's undefeated League home record Howe understandably says: "I don't think I will change the side." That would mean no place at Watford on Boxing Day for Williams, who has completed a suspension, and Woodcock, who should have recovered from injury. "I don't think I will change the side," he said. "I am fortunate thought as they ended their 1983 home programme was that 1986 should kick-off to winning style: their first two games are against Arsenal and Liverpool."

MANCHESTER UNITED: G. Bailey, J. Graham, C. Nelson, M. Whelan, P. McGee, W. Garton, C. Blackmore, S. Strahan, M. Hughes, F. Shepherd, C. O'Leary.

ARSENAL: J. Lukic, G. Caesars, K. Simpson, P. Davis, D. O'Leary, M. Keown, A. Allison, S. Williams, T. Harrison (Middlesbrough).

Robinson should be ready for FA Cup match

The Manchester United and England captain, Bryan Robson, who has been plagued by injury throughout the year, could be back in action within a fortnight. Robson will even be training on Christmas Day in his battle to regain fitness and his comeback target is the FA Cup third round tie against Rochdale on January 1.

United's manager, Ron Atkinson, is furious about reports that Robson's future is an uncertain one. He may not fit to lead England into the World Cup Finals in Mexico. "It's a load of trash to talk like that," he said.

Robson will be relieved to see the back of 1985. In January he dislocated his knee and soon afterwards picked up the first of a

succession of hamstring strains. He has played only 14 minutes football since limping out of England's World Cup qualifying match against Turkey at Wembley in October and is currently nursing a damaged calf muscle.

United are still four points clear at the top of the first division despite a casualty list which would have crippled most clubs and the sight are that Robson will not be the only one making a comeback soon.

Barnes and Moran are on the mend and Hogg, also a central defender, is expected to return for the Boxing Day game against Everton at Goodison Park. Atkinson denied that he had made an approach to Everton for their Scottish forward, Sharp.

Robinson goes

Liam Robinson, forward, who has played 17 times for Huddersfield in the second division since his debut in January 1984, is joining Tranmere Rovers, in the fourth division, on loan.

Rise in crowd limit

Middlesbrough's crowd limit has been increased by ground improvements to 30,000 in time for the north-east derby with Sunderland on Saturday.

Donoway on loan

Louis Donovan, Norwich City's England under-21 international winger is to join Stoke on a month's loan.



Mystery dance: Martin (left) and Steen where the action was on Saturday (Photograph: Chris Cole)

Pantomime with something for everyone

By Clive White

Luton Town.....0 West Ham United.....0

Like excited children queuing at one of Santa's grottos, we had to wait for our rewards at Kenilworth Road on Saturday. If the first half was an anticlimax, there was something for everyone, goals apart, in a second half played out in a good humoured atmosphere more akin to a pantomime than a football match.

It was perhaps enough to mislead Luton's directors into thinking that next season's bet on away supporters was ill conceived. They might even have regretted giving away free programmes to everyone except the visiting supporters.

On the field, both sides battled with total commitment. When David Platt, the Luton manager, was asked, not without mischief, if he saw the incident which led to Devonshire being taken to hospital as a facial injury in the closing

minutes, he replied: "I didn't but I hope one of our players did it. I would be most upset if we were not challenging. Seriously, I hope the lad's all right."

Platt complimented West Ham on their resilience at a critical time of the season for them. The old joke is that no matter how high West Ham fly they invariably come down with the Christmas decorations.

This result ought to have pleased both sides. West Ham equalled their club record of 18 League games unbeaten, while Luton checked a record sixth consecutive away victory. If that sounded negative from Luton's point of view one should say that it had been a boxing season in the last minute. Coventry was upended as he was about to shoot.

That, unfortunately, was only one of the incidents in a curtailed

who is being continually told how magnificent they are. Nowhere is the iron content in the Hammer more concentrated than within the No 5 shirt of Martin. He dealt almost contemptuously with the awkward, aggressive talent of Harford.

Martin achieved the notable feat of being the only man on the field to confront Thomas. Luton's unannounced, gangling but gifted left back, without being cast aside like an out of favour doll, lacked Martin's success in bowing Thomas over and if the result was a free kick for Luton it did no harm to West Ham's new tough image.

It is popular at the moment to discuss possible England shadow squad with a view to next summer's World Cup finals. Martin is one such possible reserve and Foster, of Luton, is even more of an outsider. If there are any better candidates in the country then they must be saving their best for Mexico.

Marvin's performance against Harford was mightily impressive. Foster, against McAvanilla, did nothing less. Reputations, small or large, are all the same to Foster, whether craftily anticipating the next move of the new Scottish folk hero or roaring his disapproval at some naivety on the part of his young team mate. Thomas (England's likely deputy in the Scotland team we are given to understand).

The Luton crowd, in turn, roared their approval of their beloved Fox and the visibly maturing qualities of their Luton team. As Graham Mackrell, the company secretary, said afterwards: "People often say that at the end of a season 'Luton did well, for them.' It's the 'for them' we want to be rid of."

LUTON TOWN: S. Taylor, J. Bracken, M. Thomas, P. Mitchell, S. Foster, M. Donaghy, M. H. B. Smith, M. Harford, M. North, D. Priest. WEST HAM UNITED: P. Jones, S. Smith, S. Walters, A. Galt, A. Martin, A. Devonshire, R. Foster, M. McAvanilla, A. Dickson, A. Cobby, M. O'Neil. Referee: D. A. Hughes (Oxford).

Ferguson is ordered from dugout

At Tannadish, where Dundee United showed they are serious contenders for the title by beating Aberdeen 2-1, Alex Ferguson, the Aberdeen manager, was ordered from the dugout for his part-time employment, the Scottish Football Association.

This incident occurred in the second half when Ferguson appeared to make remarks from the dugout.

Hearts beat faster and head league

By Hugh Taylor

Heart of Midlothian have taken the lead at the top of the Scottish league by beating Dundee United 2-1, a victory over St Mirren putting them a point ahead of Aberdeen.

The only goal at Paisley was scored by Black and it extended Hearts' unbeaten record to 12 games. But the match ended on a controversial note with St Mirren players besieging the referee with bitter protests after being denied a goal in the last minute. Coventry was upended as he was about to shoot.

That, unfortunately, was only one of the incidents in a curtailed

premier division programme which showed that the season of goodwill has not yet reached Scottish football. At Kenilworth Road, Luton and Rangers drew 1-1, a spectacle was arrested as he tried to attack Rough, the Hibernian goalkeeper, and another, dressed as a Scotland player, was ejected after becoming involved in a scuffle on the terracing.

The defeat by Dundee United not only topped Aberdeen from the Scottish league but also ended their unhappy record in away matches to six successive games without a win. While it was a poor performance from the champions, United's play

was impressive. They were far ahead of Aberdeen in style and the return of Sturrock added to the attack. Hearts' defence, however, was being siphoned. United's goals came from Bannan (penalty) and Sturrock. Stark scored for Aberdeen.

United's manager, Ron Atkinson, is furious about reports that Robson's future is an uncertain one. He may not fit to lead England into the World Cup Finals in Mexico. "It's a load of trash to talk like that," he said.

Robson will be relieved to see the back of 1985. In January he dislocated his knee and soon afterwards picked up the first of a

Reading psychology

By Nicholas Harling

Reading.....0 Plymouth Argyle.....3

The third division may lose Swansea City forever but it stands to be enriched if the rest of its members can follow the compelling example set by the top two teams on Saturday.

There was Plymouth's sweet, simple football, which for an hour or more threatened not only to prolong the unexciting season but to hand Reading a humiliating defeat. Then there was one of the season's most remarkable comebacks by the home team from the apparent hopelessness of being three goals down in 48 minutes. Finally, there was the booking of McElhinney for dissent and the dismissal of Nibbel for kicking Rogers as Plymouth's defenders let frustration get the better of them.

If the eventual outcome was a

travesty for Argyle, considering the superior quality of the football from the men in the white, who can not deny that Reading's more direct, less attractive style is vindicated, given that the leaders have stretched their advantage to 16 points.

Promotion, even the championship, look such formalities for Reading, their manager, Stan Branford, is setting his players a points record target to keep them interested. Such was the excitement at Elm Park, however, that the visitors were happy to come away without a coronary. "I was surprised that no one had a heart attack," he said. "I was close to one."

READING: G. Woodcock, G. Pears, C. Bailey, S. Taylor, J. Bracken, M. Thomas, P. Mitchell, S. Foster, M. Donaghy, M. H. B. Smith, M. Harford, M. North, D. Priest. PLYMOUTH ARGYLE: G. Craddock, G. Nibbel, L. Cooper, G. Bowney, G. McElhinney, R. Sumner, G. Garton, S. Coughlin, R. Clendon, G. Nelson, R. D. Russell (Birmingham).

First division									
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Sheff Utd	11	Sheff Utd	12	Sheff Utd	13	Sheff Utd	14	Sheff Utd	15
Sheff Utd	16	Sheff Utd	17	Sheff Utd	18	Sheff Utd	19	Sheff Utd	20
Sheff Utd	21	Sheff Utd	22	Sheff Utd	23	Sheff Utd	24	Sheff Utd	25
Sheff Utd	26	Sheff Utd	27	Sheff Utd	28	Sheff Utd	29	Sheff Utd	30
Sheff Utd	31	Sheff Utd	32	Sheff Utd	33	Sheff Utd	34	Sheff Utd	35
Sheff Utd	36	Sheff Utd	37	Sheff Utd	38	Sheff Utd	39	Sheff Utd	40
Sheff Utd	41	Sheff Utd	42	Sheff Utd	43	Sheff Utd	44	Sheff Utd	45
Sheff Utd	46	Sheff Utd	47	Sheff Utd	48	Sheff Utd	49	Sheff Utd	50
Sheff Utd	51	Sheff Utd	52	Sheff Utd	53	Sheff Utd	54	Sheff Utd	55
Sheff Utd	56	Sheff Utd	57	Sheff Utd	58	Sheff Utd	59	Sheff Utd	60
Sheff Utd	61	Sheff Utd	62	Sheff Utd	63	Sheff Utd	64	Sheff Utd	65
Sheff Utd	66	Sheff Utd	67	Sheff Utd	68	Sheff Utd	69	Sheff Utd	70
Sheff Utd	71	Sheff Utd	72	Sheff Utd	73	Sheff Utd	74	Sheff Utd	75
Sheff Utd	76	Sheff Utd	77	Sheff Utd	78	Sheff Utd	79	Sheff Utd	80
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Sheff Utd	86	Sheff Utd	87	Sheff Utd	88	Sheff Utd	89	Sheff Utd	90
Sheff Utd	91	Sheff Utd	92	Sheff Utd	93	Sheff Utd	94	Sheff Utd	95
Sheff Utd	96	Sheff Utd	97	Sheff Utd	98	Sheff Utd	99	Sheff Utd	100

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HOLIDAYS AND VILLAS

TRAILFINDERS

WORLDWIDE LOW COST FLIGHTS.

THE BEST AND WE CAN PROVE IT.

160,000 clients since 1970

AROUND THE WORLD IN 72 HOURS

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